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Editor Kate Coughlan at home.

from the editor

Mostly, dogs and I don't get on. A bit like computers and me. The best I can hope for is a fractious relationship with the dogs in my life. Same with computers, including my laptop as it crashes and gobbles my words on this very wet Sunday morning. They say that a dog is man's best friend. But it is certainly not this girl's best friend. I draw your attention to the well-known fact that diamonds are a girl's best friend. Now there is a splendid piece of wisdom.

Since the dratted laptop is misbehaving and it is too early to wake the IT department, who is normally more than helpful but is (as it is only midday) upstairs sleeping off an overnight computer-gaming tournament, I will head off into the rain to walk McDuff. McDuff is a large, smelly golden retriever without any notion of his own shortcomings. He thinks he is adored by all and he loves everyone. He is my sister's dog and, as she is away for the weekend, our household is dog-sitting McDuff.

Yesterday a pair of nine-year-old boys was wrenched asunder from their computers to walk McDuff with me. The noise was horrible. Putting out their eyes with burning tapers would have been less painful to them. Laptops are a boy's best friends, I think. How come they can't tie their shoelaces or hang up their bath towels but they can master those laptops?

As McDuff gambolled with unrestrained joy at being taken for a walk, dragging both boys behind him at speed as they hung grimly on to the lead, I realised something that – shamefully – had eluded me before. Dogs experience joy. I saw it. McDuff leaping into the muddy water hole in the reserve then flinging water all over the boys… McDuff ecstatically pretending there were rabbits in the manuka stand… McDuff bouncing up to the boys, hurling himself at them with glee for no other reason that I could observe than he was happy to be alive. After an hour with McDuff I was laughing happily too and realising how dogs can give joy. Don't tell sister Rosemarie this, but McDuff made my soggy Saturday.

We had a letter from a reader pointing out that the June issue contained too few dogs. It is a happy coincidence, then, that this issue seems to be heavy on dogs – see how many you can count. This has nothing to do with yesterday's revelation but is simply serendipity. Enter your dog count for this August issue on our website competition and go into the draw to win a gorgeous coat for your dog. Whether or not you are lucky in that draw, you have made a good decision to read *NZ House & Garden*; we have a record of six houses and four gardens in this issue.

Joyously enjoy, won't you.

Kate

ABOVE Go shopping for pretty pastels on page 44.
LEFT Mid-century and Danish Modern designs are highly collectable on page 51.

ON THE COVER Furniture, books, decorative items, crockery and rug from European Antiques; orange cushion from Decortex e Famiglia; Missoni striped cushions and throw from Tessuti; floral arrangement from Vida Flores.

COVER PHOTOGRAPH: BELINDA MERRIE; BELINDA'S ASSISTANT: WENDY BOWN; STYLING: TRACEY STRANGE; KATE'S PHOTOGRAPH: MARK SMITH

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introducing

Greg Roughan
Web editor

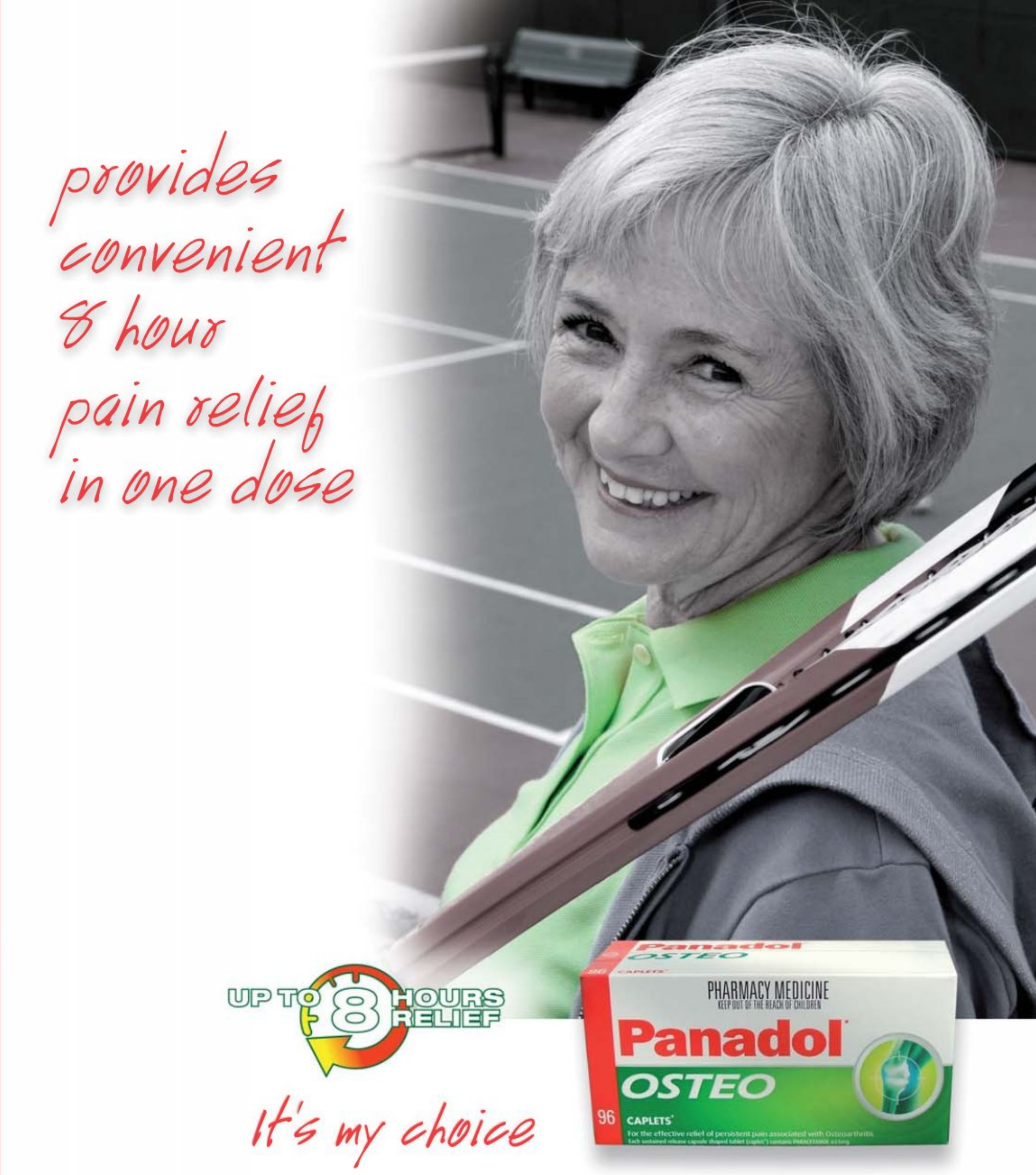
Originally from Christchurch, Greg Roughan did the obligatory five-year stint in London, where he cut his teeth in publishing and journalism, before moving to Auckland in 2005. His first grown-up job in New Zealand was as editor of *About Town*, the gossip section of the *Sunday Star-Times*, which threw him in the deep – or should that be shallow – end of Auckland life. After three gruelling years attending envelope openings, Greg moved into the more solitary world of online work. He now spends his time managing various Fairfax magazine websites, including *NZ House & Garden*'s, and freelance writing. Writing for a living is about the best job you can have, he reckons. Greg lives in the Auckland suburb of Balmoral with three flatmates and a moody tortoiseshell cat called Moscow.

Belinda Merrie
Photographer

At the tender age of 10 Belinda decided on her future career and from then on spent much of her teens in a darkroom. She studied design and photography in New Zealand and in the United States, where she spent a couple of years working for top portrait photographers. Back in Auckland after an extended OE, she has settled down to a career as a still life and interiors photographer. "I love shooting for *NZ House & Garden*, where I get to indulge my passion for beautiful interiors. My favourite shoots are the ones that embrace quirkiness and are a bit unexpected." Loves include 17th century Dutch still life painters, chrysanthemums, gorgeous bedlinen and the perfect lamp, for which she is still looking. Among other pages in this issue, Belinda shot the cover.

Claire Finlayson
Writer

Claire threw herself into freelance magazine writing after working at various art institutions, including Wellington's Te Papa museum. Words had more kick for her than pictures, decided the art history graduate, though when she was still "fresh and green" she tried to marry the two by writing a book about New Zealand self-portraits called *This Thing in the Mirror*. These days Claire writes articles in between hanging out at building sites so her toddler Sam can get his fill of live digger action. She also tries to squeeze in as many books, films and friends as she can and dreams of trying her hand at writing fiction when time permits. Claire lives on the Otago Peninsula with her hubby Ian and the aforementioned heavy machinery fan.



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SNAP!

While my wife was browsing through the April 2009 issue of your magazine she was pleasantly surprised to see a couple of familiar images. In the article about Jennifer Buckley and Rex Armstrong's art-filled home in Auckland, you showed two small portraits that were apparently hanging in the hall. The caption said these works were by an unknown artist. To put the record straight I can confirm that these portraits were painted by my wife, the Auckland-based film colourist and artist Clare Burlinson. They were exhibited in 2002 at the McPherson Gallery in Vulcan Lane, since (regrettably) closed down, in one of the gallery's annual "100 by 100" shows. Artists were invited to submit works measuring 100mm x 100mm and, if I remember correctly, all were priced at $100. The two paintings are portraits of Clare's father as a young man, and Clare herself as a young girl.

Graham Hughes, Auckland

Reply from Jennifer Buckley: Thanks for your letter, Graham. We enjoy these paintings immensely and it's good to have the details. We have had great feedback on the article and use it as "ammunition": when clients in our art gallery say their walls are too full to buy anything, we pull this out and say, "No, our walls are full. Yours have lots of room!"

talk back

NZ MUSEUM & GARDEN

When I look at your recent issues I am aware that the Age of Minimalism has almost gone and our homes are again becoming little personal museums. We are all in a small way museum curators – we hunt, we gather, we accumulate, arrange and collect and then spend our lives caring for these objects. Our treasures are like people and pets and constantly need attention. They sometimes enslave us. Even when we decide to do away with some, others quickly take their place and the curator's life goes on. So be it.

Jane Remmers, Takapuna

THAT LIVED-IN FEEL

I'm a fan of the immaculate *NZ House & Garden* look and, since we live by the sea, am forever sweeping the sand from the window sills and wooden floors – or at least that was until my daughter and her three sons (aged seven, six and three years) came to stay on holiday from Perth. We hadn't seen each other for nearly two years and when they left I was so sad I decided to leave the kids' pen marks on my newish striped couches and their fingerprints on the white walls, where they had walked upstairs to slide down, using my linen bed pillows. I look at the child's printing on the steamed-up windows and am reminded that everything is cleanable but memories are forever.

Beryl Walker, Petone

A MAGAZINE JUST FOR ME

I loved the June issue of your magazine because I kept seeing familiar things in it: I have the same cafe table and chairs that the Riepers have in their Napier home; my mum grows "black-eyed Susan" as the Prices do in their Northland home. Your Collectables page has a beautiful vase with daphne in it, which is about to flower in my little garden. In her clever Auckland home Lynda Hallinan has the same cow creamer that my niece gave me one Christmas. And I just love Mary Dickson's Hawera garden with the miniature rose 'Chameleon', which I grew but lost when I tried to shift it.

Jeanette Gould, Christchurch

OUR EASTERN CORRESPONDENT WRITES

Salaam alaykum from Abu Dhabi. It's 45-50°C here and we are not out and about much, but I have just spent a glorious few hours reading the June issue of your magazine, which is passed around among us Kiwis here. It's a joy to read about the great gardens back home. My garden here consists of a mere eight pot plants! Culture, colours and fashion are so different in this part of the world and the fabrics are to die for! One day we'll return to New Zealand and we look forward to redecorating our home with the exotic pieces we have collected on our travels.

Gail Cross, United Arab Emirates

ART ON THE FLOOR

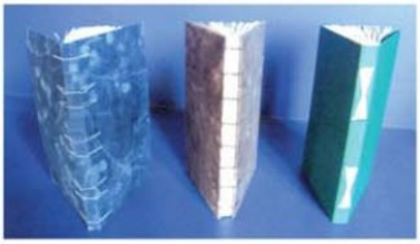
There's always something missing from the captions in your magazine: no mention is ever made of the beautiful hand-knotted rugs that often grace the floors. You give details of the artworks on the wall, the ornaments, curtains... but never the artworks underfoot. Many of the carpets appear to be from the great Islamic carpet-making nations and are thus silent but eloquent ambassadors for cultures badly misunderstood in the West. History, stories and a wealth of cultural detail lie within these knots.

Jill Worrall, Timaru

ALL IN A BIND

A few weeks back I attended a two-day workshop in Wellington with master bookbinder Barbara Schmelzer, who featured in your June issue. The new issue of the magazine, with the article on Barbara, went on sale that same weekend. One of the women brought a copy in and we all excitedly gathered around to share it. At the course everyone produced three books, each with a different binding: Secret Belgium, Coptic and German Medieval. Pictures of mine are below. I am besotted by book-making, which I discovered at a local arts workshop a year ago. There was a workshop by well-known textile artist Ailie Snow called A Personal Geography and the idea was to take some part of our lives – a job, a holiday, a favourite place – and put all these into the form of small books and boxes that she taught us how to make. I did, and am still doing, the first 11 years of my life in South Africa. I have gone on to make all sorts of different journals for my own pleasure, to give away as gifts, even sell. I am up to journal number 105!

Penny Simcox, Napier



SHARE AND SHARE ALIKE

My sister told me to go out and buy your July mag and turn straight to your *Sharing Shed* feature about three women who share a rural Hawke's Bay holiday home. She was excited and motivated by the story and asked me if I would consider investing with her and another family member in the not-so-distant future. After reading the article I was sold. What more could a group of girls want than having their own private getaway that belongs to them? Our team would love to build something similar to this exquisite place, but on the coast.

Lizzy Darley, Gisborne

UNBELIEVABLE LYNDA

I was excited to see you had featured Lynda Hallinan's house in the June edition, but I wasn't expecting such an immaculate and organised home. Is this the same Lynda who tears around with a sheet to protect a precious crop from frost and who just about beats my record for "flop crops"? And not a cat in sight!

Rebecca Williams, Lower Hutt

NZ Gardener editor Lynda Hallinan replies: My house only looks immaculate because all my gardening loot is piled up in the shed. Along with the camera-shy cats.

NOT-SO-SHINING EXAMPLE

Lynda Hallinan's home (June issue) showed it is perfectly possible to live in a small space with great comfort and style. I loved the fact that she did not put swept-up, expensive taps in the bathroom. Her kitchen is small and basic but I'll bet her food, fresh from her fabulous garden, is fantastic! We've downsized to a 10-year-old townhouse that doesn't have the latest bathroom and kitchen gear, so it's refreshing to see how beautiful a place can look with simple accoutrements. The latest and greatest shiny bits do not make a house a home.

Patricia Carswell, Christchurch

A MASTERPIECE

Bravo! I've been an avid reader of your great magazine for more than two years. Being a 20-something, I don't have my own home, but your magazine is a great way to get my artistic fix. I have looked through other home mags but they don't cut the mustard. If there's such a thing as a magazine masterpiece, this is close to it!

Annabel Steiner-Cole, Waitara

HOUSES NEED PETS…

I am surprised that, apart from Iris the dog on the cover, there were no family pets in your June issue. Surely no house is a home without a loved pet poking its nose in somewhere? Our dog Zinzan (pictured) always welcomes visitors to our place and is first at, and last to leave, every family barbecue, eager to test whatever's on the menu. It is lovely to know he is always somewhere about the house and ready with a waggy welcome after we've been out.

Rosie Spencer, Kaiapoi

Sally's reply: Plenty of dogs in this issue! You can count them and win: see page 10.

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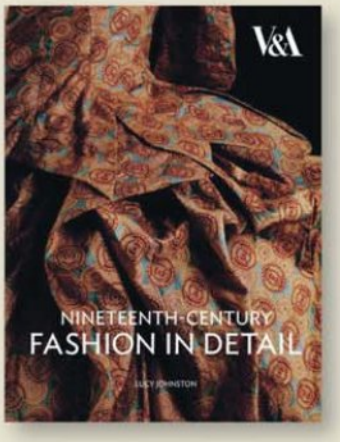

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TERMS AND CONDITIONS: Entries must be received before August 16. The winners will be sent the prizes packs to the address on their entry form.

WHO NEEDS TAMIFLU?

My three-year-old son and I – pregnant, exhausted, still plagued with morning sickness – have been suffering from bad colds all week. However, my husband, not content to contract the same illness that a mere woman might succumb to, has been struck by… the Dreaded Man Flu. I couldn't take any more of the moaning, thrashing around and gnashing of teeth that was coming from the darkened bedroom, despite having been commanded to, "Leave me for a few hours. I can deal with it". So I decided to peek through the window to check on his manly progress – and spied him sipping a cup of tea and cheerily leafing through my new magazine. Behold – a miracle! Saved by *NZ House & Garden*, and just in time for him to put the rubbish out.

Natalie Towler, Nelson

WE'RE SPRUNG!

Just got my *NZ House & Garden* email newsletter and read about you all enjoying a birthday morning tea for associate editor Sally Duggan. Any chance of getting your orange and poppy seed cake recipe? I love poppy seed cake and am always keen for a new recipe.

Sue Boden, Auckland

Sally's reply: Much as we all love home baking, it *is* deadline week. We bought the cake from The Baker's Cottage down the road from our Kingsland office. It was delicious and they've promised to give us the recipe, which we'll put on our website. We've also put up a recipe for Carrot and Poppy Seed Cake with Orange Cream Cheese Frosting from our November 2001 issue.

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Never say never

Living out their favourite motto has brought an Auckland couple rich rewards

WORDS PENNY LEWIS / **PHOTOGRAPHS** JANE USSHER

THIS PAGE Next to an old family chair in the orangerie of Derek and Sally Holland's Devonport home is an African drum, a rice container and candle stands from Bashford Antiques.
OPPOSITE (clockwise from top left) Sally and Derek Holland. An artwork by Wellington painter Cam Munroe and an industrial lamp add life to a corner space. The couple's West Highland terriers MacGregor and Molly warm up beside a roaring fire; the Oamaru stone surround was designed by Sally and made by Mark Wyman. Eight mismatched chairs gather around the Swiss dining room table.
PREVIOUS PAGES The orangerie, added during renovations, is a favourite spot for Sally and Derek.

THIS PAGE An old safe mounted on the kitchen wall does sterling work as a cupboard and has been in the Holland family for many years.
OPPOSITE (clockwise from top left) A French love seat sits in the hall outside the kitchen. The summer house began life as the home's garage. Two old French roof tiles were joined together and reborn as a vase. Among a collection of pottery are some antique pieces and some designed by Sally and made by Jill Barry.

Sally and Derek Holland have always named their houses. After all, their homes have been like much-loved members of the family. Nessca, a Devonport villa they lived in for 14 years raising their four children, Kim, Jenny, Shaun and Brett, was named after Sally's grandparents' Kaiapoi property. And Acorn Cottage was a sweet little Waiheke Island home that sheltered them while they built Glenora Estate – a farmhouse that looked so authentic it might have time-travelled from 17th century France – at Waiheke's Church Bay.

"From small acorns grow great oaks," says Sally, explaining their choice of moniker for the cottage. "Glenora was the oak."

The Hollands' Auckland home of the past four years is still awaiting its brass nameplate, but once it's installed on the outside of the couple's Stanley Point, Devonport, house, it will read Anderleigh, an old family name from Derek's side. It was love at first sight for Derek when they came to see this 1923 cliff-top arts and crafts home on 1480sqm, designed by architect Gerald Jones. "There were a thousand miles of sky at Waiheke and this house had the same wonderful openness about it."

The house needed tender loving care but that suited Sally and Derek, who get a kick out of working together on building projects. >

"We love it. We love the ability to be creative, working at our own pace, in our own way," Sally says. Three days after moving into Anderleigh, the first group of tradespeople arrived. "It was crazy. We hadn't even really unpacked," Sally recalls. There then began an artful renovation that would last three years. The Hollands worked full-time on the house, alongside the subbies. "Being hands-on is the only way to get a grip on things. What can I say? We were nuts," says Sally, laughing.

The couple enlisted the help of self-confessed "Anglophile and arts and crafts devotee" Don Singleton to draw up plans. They soon nicknamed Don, a retired architectural draughtsman, carpenter and joiner, "Stromboli" thanks to his fondness for a Resene paint colour of the same name – which he didn't manage to persuade them to use.

Don's plans restored the house to its former glory from top to toe, but also tweaked it to make the most of the sun and garden. Living areas in the house had always been arranged to enjoy breathtaking water views but, before Don worked his magic, the sunniest spot in the house was the laundry. The upstairs was done first, with builder Greg Gatfield creating a master bedroom with IMAX-style views of the harbour, his-and-hers wardrobes and a luxurious open en suite.

Downstairs was a more substantial undertaking that included the installation of new marble and French oak floors. The builder for this phase was Warwick Gair, son of former cabinet minister George Gair. Reusing existing joinery and carefully making new pieces to match, the Hollands retained the footprint of the house but reconfigured the rooms to include a large kitchen and adjacent sitting area they call the orangerie, a space in which they now spend most of their time. >

THIS PAGE The living room houses a collection of much-loved objects; the artwork is by Stanley Palmer and the drapes are made with natural fabric from Hemptech. **OPPOSITE** (from top) Behind their Cavit & Co sofas is the Hollands' collection of pots; the table lamp base between the sofas, bought in Melbourne, was formerly a rice jar. A trip to Sydney yielded another distinctive lamp, one with vases attached to the stand.

THIS PAGE Antiques in the guest room include a beautiful bed and English oak dresser from John Stephens Antiques and a mirror in the en suite from Ambiance Interiors.
OPPOSITE In the master en suite, a cupboard designed by Sally caters for his-and-hers storage. Sally buys most of her antique bedding at Auckland's La Cigale and French Country Collections. Antique perfume bottles.

Sally didn't want the "brand-new Gib look" for the walls and hit upon a novel substitute quite by accident. A temporary repair in another part of the house called for plywood, which she decided to paint. After admiring the textured, aged look she'd created, she went for the illusion of more depth by painting it in layers of black, French grey and, finally, white. Fifty-eight sheets of plywood were hand-picked for their grain and Sally started on the black paint.

"When the builders came in the morning they saw the blackened ply and thought we'd had a fire."

It's this sort of ingenious thinking that Sally has put to good use working with paint effects artist Ross Lewis and cabinetmaker Paul Stables under the name Combined Talent Group. The trio's handiwork is seen throughout Anderleigh and they are also responsible for the fit-out and finishing of the wonderful new cafe and shop at Bennett's Chocolatiers of Mangawhai.

Sally and Derek have taken to travelling, building and renovating together with gusto since their children left home. But their sense of adventure and openness to new opportunities really hit high gear 15 years ago when they spent four months driving around Europe. It was the furthest they had travelled at that stage, after bringing up the family and establishing businesses together in Auckland, including Devonport Realty.

They immersed themselves in the Continent's vibrant history, architecture, food and culture and fell in love with France where they "very nearly bought a pile of rocks on 14 acres" at Apt. "But there were minor problems," jokes Sally. "The farmhouse needed a lot of renovations and we couldn't speak the language!"

The OE affected them deeply. "We were never the same again," Derek recalls. "It was like, 'The kids have left home and the dog's died. What do we do?'" says Sally. "We felt very unsettled."

Rather than take on a huge renovation project in France, they came back to New Zealand and considered buying a family bach. "We both had fantastic upbringings in family baches. Derek's was on Waiheke Island and my family's was at Tikao Bay on Banks Peninsula." >

Derek compiled a list of suitable locations, including Waiheke, and a real estate agent mentioned 3.2ha for sale at Church Bay. So, with 10 minutes to spare to make it to the ferry, Sally and Derek popped over for a look. They couldn't have kept poker faces if they'd tried.

"We did what you're never supposed to do. We opened our mouths, looked at each other and went, 'Wow'," Sally recalls.

A week later they owned their patch of land at Waiheke's Church Bay – a glorious spot, flanked with bush and with 14 mature pohutukawa encircling the perfect building site. Sally and Derek threw their energies into building Glenora Estate (which appeared in *NZ House & Garden* in 1999) and hosted wedding parties. Derek was the celebrant and Sally the wedding photographer, but they also cooked, cleaned and did the gardens themselves, not to mention planting 200 olive trees and a boutique vineyard and producing their own olive oil and cabernet franc wine.

"It was a fantastic business and was voted one of the top 40 places in the world to get married," says Sally. "It got very busy."

The couple decided to relocate and build again on land they'd purchased across the road from Glenora. This home would be designed in a French villa style, more tailored for weddings and with separate accommodation. But fate presented them with an offer they couldn't refuse for the land and they accepted. They were going to take Glenora off the market, but were told a buyer was flying in especially to look at the property. It would have seemed rude to turn them away and soon Glenora was sold too.

Sally and Derek looked for a new home on the island but found nothing suitable, so they decided to see what Auckland had to offer. Properties were viewed at beachside Milford and over the harbour bridge in Parnell, Remuera and St Heliers. They never thought they would come back to Devonport until they were persuaded to look at Anderleigh.

The Hollands love their home and would be happy here 10 years from now, but who knows what's next on the horizon? They're open to challenges and living in France is still on the bucket list. "What you learn as you get older is never say never," says Derek with a smile. ■

THIS PAGE French doors lead to the backyard. The Hollands brought the cast-iron fountain from their previous home. Molly and MacGregor in the garden. **OPPOSITE** Maritime keepsakes in a corner. Twin beds in the grandchildren's room. The dressing room.

Warm welcome

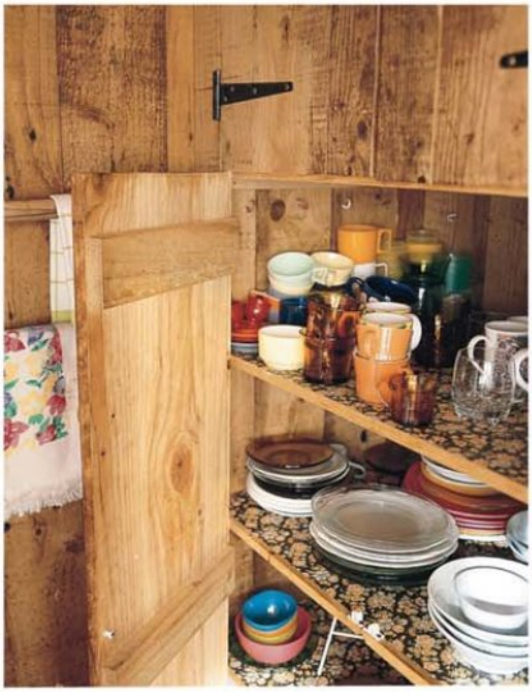
Three generations have come home to a rustic family bach on Coromandel's Thames coast

WORDS CLAIRE McCALL / **PHOTOGRAPHS** MATTHEW WILLIAMS

OPPOSITE Daniel Barnes (second from right), son of the bach's original owners, and his wife Victoria Spence join Dotty the dog and their children Patti, Jake and Charlotte Barnes on the rear deck.
THIS PAGE It has become a Barnes family tradition to add to the miscellaneous collection of dining chairs.

THIS PAGE Charlotte finds a place on the spiral staircase.
OPPOSITE ABOVE Children and animals congregate around the river-stone fireplace.
OPPOSITE BELOW Rough-hewn timber walls provide unpretentious structure and storage.

"My parents were conscious of architecture and good at creating environments"



THE MEANDERING DRIVE from Thames along the coastal road to the town of Coromandel is a quintessential Kiwi experience. Silver-foil seas are interspersed with the occasional slip of a beach on one side and, on the other, an unassuming line-up of baches facing the passing parade and changing tides. At Kereta, about midway between Thames and Coromandel town, the Barnes family bach has been welcoming three generations of family and friends for the past three decades.

It was the windswept beauty of the place that first brought Paul and Judy Barnes with their three young children to the area in the 1960s. That and messing about in boats – going fishing or clambering into a clinker-built dinghy to explore. Then, on a coastal drive, they spotted a for sale sign tacked to a wooden gate and their imaginations were captured. “At the time, Dad owned a small, impoverished advertising agency. They mortgaged themselves to the hilt to raise the £2000 buying price,” explains the couple’s son Daniel.

In 1968 that was an immense outlay but it did secure them two plots of waterfront land and a dwelling of sorts. “The old farm cottage was held together with plastic paint and mingimingi,” recalls Daniel fondly. For 10 years the Barnes clan kept the decrepit house in one piece until they got wind that the council wanted to acquire their roadside section as a rest area with a picnic table and four concrete mushroom seats.

“My parents decided to build a house on the land and, because they were short of cash, it needed to be as economical as possible,” he says.

But what they lacked in funding, they made up for in flair and the cottage has retained that rustic allure since 1978. It may be spartan but its soul is storybook chic: think Heidi meets hip. With the help of a family friend, architect Graham Strez, Paul and Judy designed a compact two-storey escape with a spiral staircase leading to the upstairs bedrooms.

Because the land was low-lying, they used poles to raise the house above the flood plain of the nearby creek. A boardwalk heightens the sense of arrival as it leads across long grass to the board-and-batten cottage with its river-stone chimney breast.

Indoors there is no deviation from the parsimonious palette: walls, floors and ceilings are all rough-sawn pine. But what might have been plain and dull has, instead, a timeless quality. "My parents were original people. They were conscious of architecture and good at creating environments," says Daniel.

Judy Barnes, especially, had the happy knack of weaving a welcome into interiors. "Mum was a true entrepreneur. She started the Poppies chain of book-shops as well as Grey Lynn's Dear Reader, known for its unique feel."

Stained-glass windows bring an almost hallowed light into the bach's downstairs spaces. The furniture is neither fashionable nor transitory. Much of it was bought from junk shops and antiques stores in the 70s. Chairs around the dining table are rickety and mismatched, the carpet is past its prime, the kitchen's Shacklock stove still serves its purpose and the pantry is packed with Duraware plastic crockery. >

ABOVE The bach's weathered timbers blend into the pohutukawa backdrop. **OPPOSITE** (main picture) Charlotte's beloved bear, Clifford, awaits her return; she has seen pods of visiting dolphins from this window. **OPPOSITE** (top to bottom) The little bed behind the curtain is fondly called the Train Bed. The bathroom and laundry are tiny and the house has a habit of rocking to the washing machine's spin cycle. A double bed fits snugly under the timber ceiling.

LEFT Patti, Charlotte and friend Freeman forage in the great outdoors; the beach can be glimpsed beyond the grassy bank.

A common colour theme draws together an idiosyncratic assembly of decorative objects. Apart from the rich ruby glow of the leadlight windows, plastic light shades in poppy red add punch to the moody interiors. A Victorian chair re-covered in red tartan is resplendent by the fire and cheery red and white floral cloths grace the table; funky Marimekko cushions add a twist.

"Judy loved red," says Daniel's wife Victoria Spence. "There even used to be a red toilet here and it was a sad day when the plumber called time on it."

Antelope skins and spears from Africa, South American pottery and keepsakes from the Fiji islands are evidence of a life well lived.

The hewn-timber walls come into their own for storage and an impromptu display of kids' art. Cooking utensils are hung from nails and shelves above the fireplace hold everything necessary for treasured time out.

Daniel and his two sisters, Felicity and Katie, have inherited the cottage and its associated memories of their parents – Paul died in 1993 and Judy just last year.

In the early days, Daniel remembers being flung over the side of the boat for an intrepid swim back to home base. "We'd set out on a clear summer morning but the weather in the gulf blows up quickly. Often, on our return, the waves would be too big to moor the boat."

After such an adventure, it was comforting to warm the cockles with some good old-fashioned cooking. Sometimes family and friends would scour the rocks for shellfish to add to a bouillabaisse prepared in a generous aluminium pot on the beach.

"Dad was a real foodie. I can still see him at the top of the driveway, a tea towel over his shoulder as he paused mid-cooking to welcome us to the bach."

One such meal has become the stuff of legend. "My younger sister Katie was just two weeks old but Dad insisted we come to the bach for Christmas," explains Daniel. Since Judy was busy with the newborn, she left the Christmas dinner preparation to her hubby. Big mistake: he'd forgotten to shop. Fearlessly, Paul Barnes concocted a solution from his cookbook collection: the horrified family sat down to steaming bowls of muddy 14th century bread soup.

In summer, Daniel, Victoria and their three children Jake, 16, Patti, 12, and Charlotte, nine, might drag the dining table into the stream alongside the house and eat bangers in buns, legs dangling in the eel-filled flow. "We drop scraps of sausages into the water. The next thing you know, you have grey shapes moving between your feet."

The sources of adventure are endless: a splash downstream under the bridge to the rocky beach or a pine cone collecting mission perhaps. Jake loves to stay up late and play card games or help Dad with the many jobs around the property. Patti enjoys crab hunting with her cousins Hope, 11, and Piper, nine. Charlotte dons gumboots to conquer the undergrowth surrounding the house.

"The nicest thing about being here is being able to step out of your normal life," says Victoria. "This place is like [children's book] *The Velveteen Rabbit* – it becomes more real as it is used." ■

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Smile lines

A grin-inducing artwork adds some sunshine to August

STYLING TRACEY STRANGE / **PHOTOGRAPH** BELINDA MERRIE

There's something very uplifting about ribbons. Wrapped around presents, tied in little girls' hair, attached to balloons… it's difficult not to smile when you see them. But, when they are latticed and colour-coordinated and made into a work of art, they are spectacular. Put this picture on your wall and watch everyone grin as they pass by. Wall hanging $650 from Vida Flores, (09) 523 5454; folding chair $1580 for set of four from Design Denmark, (09) 361 3333.

Lift the lid. **Urns** $78 (47cm) and $58 (31cm), both from Le Forge, (09) 638 7900.

Leafy glamour. Etched **vase** $119 from Republic Home, (09) 361 1137.

Well defined. William Yeoward **goblet** $213 from Cavit & Co, (09) 358 3771.

Scallop season. Holmegaard Lotus **bowl** $82.50 from Design Demark, (09) 361 3333.

Sharp glass

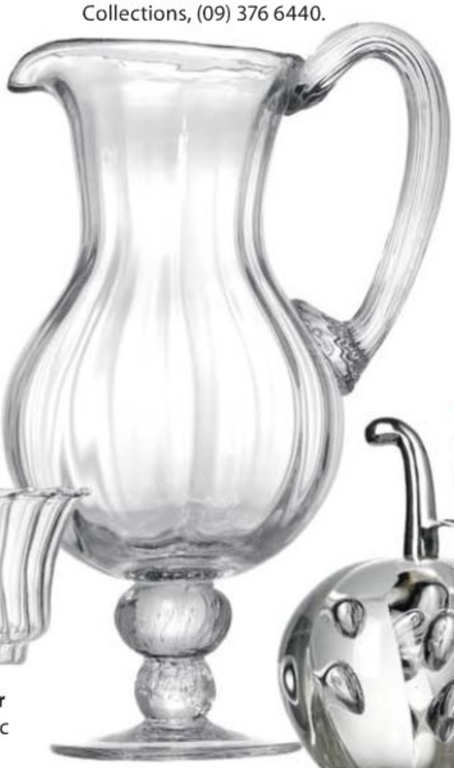
Add glamour and sophistication with light-reflecting glassware

STYLING TRACEY STRANGE / **PHOTOGRAPHS** BELINDA MERRIE

Good scents. Lalique **perfume bottle** $1066 from Cavit & Co, (09) 358 3771.

Catch the light. **Candlestick** $68.50 and **candle** $4.50, both from Tessuti, (09) 378 8490.

Perfect form. Lambert **carafe** $644 from Cavit & Co, (09) 358 3771.



Stand out. **Jug** $65, for stockists contact French Country Collections, (09) 376 6440.

Switched on. **Lamp base** $209 and **shade** $90, for stockists contact French Country Collections, (09) 376 6440.

Tea time. **Jug** $8.90 and **sugar bowl** $6.90, both from Republic Home, (09) 361 1137.

Take a bite. **Glass apple** $77.90 from Corso De' Fiori, (09) 307 9166.

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Pastel perfect

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STYLING TRACEY STRANGE / **PHOTOGRAPHS** BELINDA MERRIE

Pastel perch. **Chair** $495, for stockists contact Le Forge, (09) 638 7900; **throw** $79 from Republic Home, (09) 361 1137; background painted in Resene's 'Ashen Lavender'.

Making fire. **Candelabra** $270, for stockists contact CC Interiors, (09) 589 1950; Kiri **candles** $3.50 each from Design Denmark, (09) 361 3333.

Into the blue. Murano glass **bowl** $250 from Mid Century Design, (09) 522 8561.

Blooming lovely. **Vase** $155 from Flotsam & Jetsam, (09) 361 3831.

Ladylike. Alessi **corkscrew** $118 from Askew, (09) 378 1414.

Hit the deck. Wave folding **chair** $1580 (set of four) from Design Denmark, (09) 361 3333.

Well framed. Wooden **frame** $37.95, for stockists contact Capulet, (09) 300 9404.

Heart on a plate. Rachel Carley **plates** $31.50 from Tessuti, (09) 378 8490.

Do the polka. **Cushion** $69 from Madder & Rouge, (09) 522 1062.

Tea and sympathy. Maxwell Williams **teapot** $19.95 from The Homestore, (09) 529 9491.

Spring stems. Glass **vases** $5 each (water tinted with food colouring) from Vida Flores, (09) 523 5454.

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... the stunning pink in Harlequin's latest **fabric range.** For stockists contact (09) 529 2007.

Recycling romance

"Redesigning memories" is how Melbourne-based designer Cindy-Lee Davies describes her approach to the often whimsical ***homewares*** *she produces under the label Lightly. The romantically quirky Lightly line-up includes more than 70 products, from rugs and lighting to ceramics (you'll find her china butterflies on our Garden Shopping page) and her signature lace/doily range. Doily plate $84 from Tuberose, (09) 520 5635.*

Home front

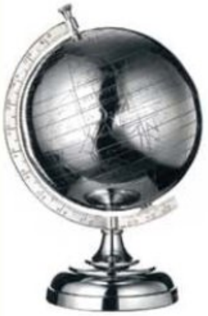
Style editor Tracey Strange shares news and views from the home stores

The fourth **book** in the popular *The Way We Live* series by Stafford Cliff and Gilles de Chabaneix deals *With The Things We Love*. It's about gorgeous, quirky pieces and the way they're displayed. The photos are evocative and the text informative. $78 from Thames & Hudson.

"Keep warm this winter by piling your bed with cosy linen and quilts. Soft flannel sheets make a bed irresistible on cold nights. Top with a fluffy duvet then a thick cotton quilt for the perfect winter nest"

– PAULA WALLACE, WALLACE COTTON

THREE OF THE BEST... *globes*



CLASSIC
Silver globe $630 from Smith & Caughey's, (09) 377 4770.

ANTIQUE
Napoleon III globe $1250 from European Antiques, (09) 360 9858.

MODERN
Matte silver globe $295 from Design Denmark, (09) 361 3333.

PHOTOGRAPHS: BELINDA MERRIE

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Well dressed

An elegant dressing table is a perfect look for a feminine bedroom

WORDS & STYLING TRACEY STRANGE / **PHOTOGRAPH** BELINDA MERRIE

MIRROR MIRROR
Emphasise good lighting with a decorative mirror. **Mirror** $239 from Simply Divine, (07) 827 0402.

A FRAGRANT CORNER
Scented candles add fragrance, warmth and ambience. Lalique **trinket box** $886 and **perfume bottle** $965, both from Cavit & Co, (09) 358 3771; bone china **flowers** $53 (for six) from May Time Marketing, (09) 526 4274; Sundari **candle**, for stockists contact Beauty Care, (09) 336 1891.

SOFTLY LIT
A pretty lamp is a welcome addition to any dressing table. **Lamp** base and shade $175.50 from Harrowset Hall, (09) 524 4452.

DECORATIVE DETAILS
Fragrances, old-fashioned perfume bottles and flowers add romance to any setting. **Vase** $35 from Flotsam & Jetsam, (09) 361 3831; Lalique **Venus figurine** $749 from Cavit & Co, (09) 358 3771. Chanel, Chloe and Vera Wang fragrances available nationwide.

EMBELLISH
Throw in a little softness with a cosy wrap and decorative cushion. **Cushion** $185, for stockists contact May Time Marketing, (09) 526 4274. Throw stylist's own.

FRENCH GLAMOUR
A dressing table should always look elegant. French grey **table** $1025 from Artisans Home, (09) 414 1036.

WELL SEATED
Sit pretty on a comfortable chair. Painted **chair** $989, for stockists contact CC Interiors, (09) 589 1950.

BIG/GTR049/NZHG

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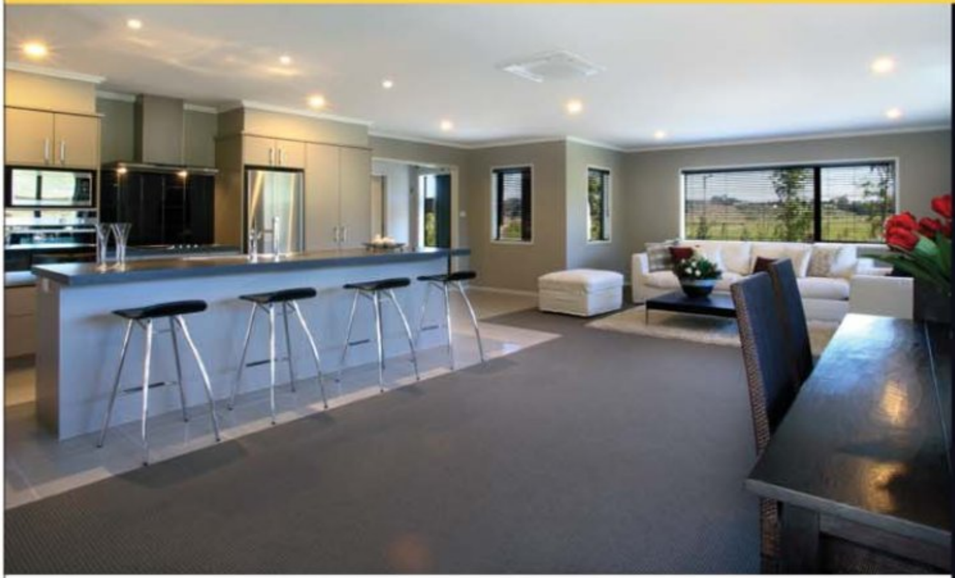

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So last century

Mid-century design is a popular new category at auctions, reports Pam Neville

STYLIST TRACEY STRANGE / **PHOTOGRAPHS** BELINDA MERRIE

Danish Modern bench seat $1850, gold and white pitcher/glasses set $330, mid-century dining chair $2250 for a set of six, cream and grey rug $1850 and book (Slim Aarons' *Once Upon a Time*) $135, all from Mid Century Design, (09) 522 8561. Minnie the shih-tzu.

1

"People who like the earthier, organic aesthetic go for Danish Modern, while those who want a more sophisticated, elegant look appreciate American mid-century pieces"

6

ABOVE Speckled lamp with shade $1250 from Mid Century Design, (09) 522 8561.

IS MID-CENTURY design the same as retro? And is retro the same as Danish Modern? The answer seems to be "sort of, but not quite".

Interior designer Bridget Hanley of Mid Century Design in Auckland agrees there are similarities, but she views retro as being more like pop art. And she sees Danish Modern furniture as plainer, more basic than the American mid-century furniture in her shop.

"I think people who like the earthier, organic aesthetic go for Danish Modern, while those who want a more sophisticated, elegant look appreciate American mid-century pieces.

"Where a collector of New Zealand studio pottery might furnish their house with Danish Modern, a collector of paintings might prefer mid-century design."

Cameron Woodcock, of retro shop Flotsam and Jetsam, is happy to describe retro and mid-century design as pretty much the same thing.

"In general terms, it is all the stuff that came out after art deco and up to the 1980s."

Ross Millar at auction house Art + Object says retro is an umbrella term, a catch-all for day-to-day items of the period, whereas mid-century design covers the work of designers and producers with some formal training.

What is agreed is that mid-century design is a mixture of styles that developed after World War II, coinciding with a time of scientific and technical advances. Furniture designers were experimenting with new finishes and laminates and architects were drawing open-plan layouts for both residential and commercial buildings.

In furniture, the style was informal and functional, with a move away from the hard, square lines of art deco to more flowing and organic shapes. Scandinavian designers were influential and favoured materials included light-coloured timbers, aluminium, natural fibres and glass. ■

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1 RETRO LIGHTING
This three-lamp ceiling-mounted light dates from the 1950s. It's on sale for $395 at Retro in Gisborne, (06) 868 3580.

2 VINYL SOFA
Also at Retro is this large 1940s sofa. It has been repadded and recovered in vinyl. $1950.

3 SOLID OAK
Fully restored, this is one of two 1970s solid oak kidney tables on sale for $150 each at Decor Revived, Whangarei. This one is 90cm long and 40cm high. (09) 459 1136.

4 A BIT ON THE SIDEBOARD
This unusual piece of art deco furniture came from Switzerland to Motueka, where it is now for sale at Yelverton Antiques, (03) 528 0045. It's a sideboard that extends first into a desk and then into a six-seater dining table. Made from walnut, it dates from the 1930s and carries the brand "Mueble Masterly". $1400.

5 LOUNGE SUITE
This all-original 1950s lounge suite comprises a central sofa and two chairs, which can be used separately or as one unit. It is on sale at Retro for $795.

6 KIWI CLASSIC
The Curvesse chair by Garth Chester is a New Zealand design classic from the mid 1940s. Examples of the bent plywood chairs are keenly sought and have sold for up to $5000. This one is coming up for auction at Art + Object in Auckland on August 20 and is expected to sell in the $3000 to $4000 range. (09) 354 4646.

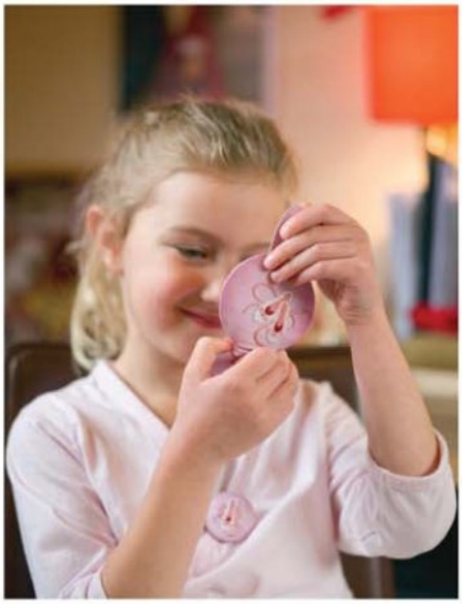
SMALL PHOTOGRAPHS SUPPLIED

Needle pointe

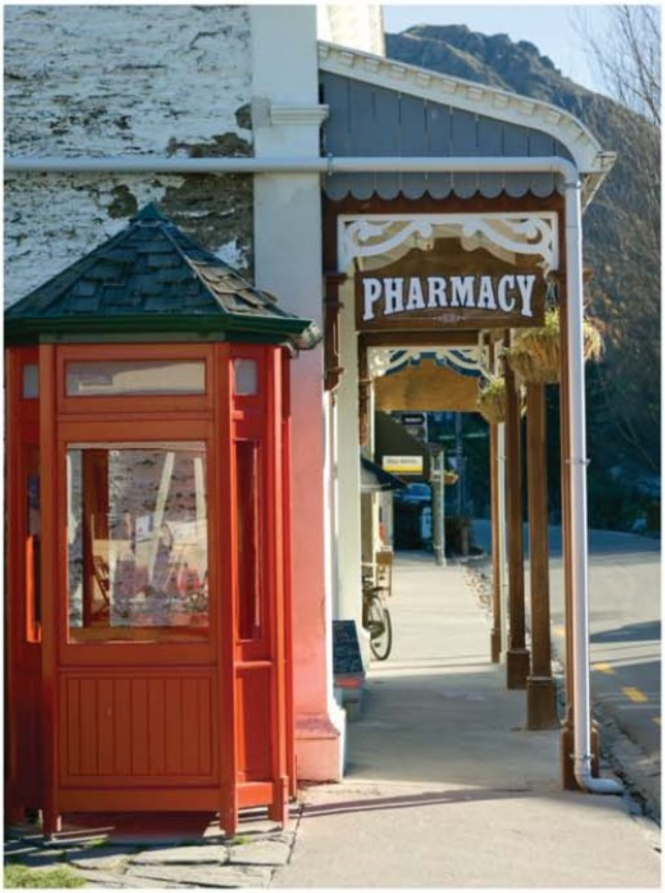
Embroidery-mad designer Tamsin Cooper joins forces with the Royal New Zealand Ballet

WORDS SUZANNE MAHAFFIE / **PHOTOGRAPHS** DANIEL ALLEN

THIS PAGE (above) Tamsin Cooper admires one of the Royal New Zealand ballet tutus on loan for her new project. Tamsin with sales manager Jo Wallace in the company's Arrowtown workroom (right). **OPPOSITE** (top left) All the embroidery on Tamsin's pieces is hand-worked by Vietnamese women in their home villages; the range of RNZ Ballet accessories includes a girl's shoulder bag, a pendant, an evening purse, a small black velvet coin purse, a mirror compact, a jewellery roll and a velvet hair tie. Velvet rose pendants adorn a black mannequin (top right).



THIS PAGE (above) Tamsin with her sales manager Jo's six-year-old daughter Isobel. Budding ballerina Isobel (far left) with one of the compact mirrors from the ballet range. A Russian doll (left) was made in Vietnam.
OPPOSITE Beautifully preserved historic Arrowtown is the perfect inspiration for Tamsin.



"I live in a house surrounded by boys so it is nice to share a little part of the romance of the ballet world"

Like many little girls, designer Tamsin Cooper took ballet lessons and dreamed of becoming a dancer. "I honestly believed I was going to go to Britain and train at the Royal Academy," she says.

Sadly, it never happened. But, much to her delight, her latest project lets her revisit that childhood world of fantasy and fabulousness. Last year the Royal New Zealand Ballet invited Tamsin to design a range of accessories that would appeal to its supporters – everyone from budding ballerinas through to the more traditional older audiences who regularly attend performances.

Tamsin has a reputation for feminine, romantic work – sumptuous, hand-embroidered silk velvet coats are her signature pieces – and her designs are a perfect match for tulle and tutus.

"I was so excited going to Wellington for the first meeting," she says.

"The ballet is housed in the St James Theatre and when you go through those doors you enter a different world. You can even see the company dancers rehearsing. I was beside myself."

The new range – each item detailed with a tiny pair of hand-embroidered pink ballet shoes – includes brooches, hair ties, compact mirrors, shoulder and evening bags, necklaces and a silk shoe bag.

"There are several items under $30 so it is very reasonably priced," she says. "We are conscious of the recession and we wanted to provide something for everyone." The range will be available through the RNZB's website and at all performances, as well as in selected Tamsin Cooper outlets.

"We are really in a sponsorship role – we have provided the designs and product. It is not a money-making exercise for us at all. The real benefit for us is not financial; it's the opportunity to be associated with such an amazing, creative institution."

RNZB general manager Amanda Skoog says: "For some time I have been thinking about how the ballet could benefit from new partnerships – a commercial venture that reflects our brand. Tamsin is the perfect fit."

The range will be launched at the opening of *La Sylphide* and more pieces will be added for the *Peter Pan* production later this year.

Tamsin launched her business in 2003 from her Arrowtown home when her son Hugo, now six, was a baby. Textiles and design run in the family: her father David and sister Emily run Silkbody, a company making fine silk clothing.

Tamsin started with a small range of silk wallets and purses. Then, while on a trip to Vietnam, she became enchanted with needlework. >

Luke and Tamsin with their new son Louis; big brother Hugo was at school.

"I realised there was all this fantastic embroidery talent there in the villages," she says.

These days she and husband Luke Calder, a designer, run the company from two townhouses, living in the front one and working in the back. Supported by a staff of just three, they supply Tamsin Cooper clothes and accessories to more than 100 outlets around the country.

Each year the couple visits Vietnam to source new materials, check on their suppliers and keep in touch with the people who have helped them build up their business on this side of the world. Most of their products are sewn in Hanoi, then embroidered and embellished by workers in villages in the north.

"People often ask questions about manufacturing in Asia," she says. "I'm very aware of our responsibilities."

She was thrilled when, on their last visit, a village elder told her the business she was sending their way was making a huge difference to the lives of local women. Instead of being forced to travel to the city for work, they were able to stay at home, supporting their families while preserving traditional skills.

The company is also involved with the New Zealand Vietnam Health Trust, an aid organisation set up after the war by a group of New Zealand doctors.

Tamsin has become resigned to people asking about her much-publicised trademark battle with Kiwi designer Trelise Cooper. She describes the experience, which ended when Trelise withdrew all legal proceedings, as "humbling" and says it demonstrated the strength of human kindness.

"I had people from all over the country sending me letters, poems, artwork."

On their townhouse porch a pair of floral gumboots takes pride of place. "A woman in the North Island sent me those. It was just amazing."

Now mum to a new baby son, Louis, born in April, Tamsin is relishing the chance to be involved with New Zealand Ballet. "I live in a house surrounded by boys so it is especially nice to share a little part of the romance of the ballet world," she says. "I understand little girls' dreams. It's just great to be part of such a lovely project."

Visit nzhouseandgarden.co.nz for more pictures and to enter the draw to win some of Tamsin's ballet accessories.

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Air supply

A trans-Tasman couple is revelling in the oxygen-infused atmosphere of their Crown Range home

WORDS CLAIRE FINLAYSON / **PHOTOGRAPHS** AARON McLEAN

The Rookes' home on farmland above Arrowtown keeps company with the mighty Remarkables mountain range.

The pride of the dining room: two 350-year-old Chinese temple doors converted into tables that are pushed together for dinner parties; the huge apple behind them was painted by contemporary Chinese artist Tian Mangzi.

THIS PAGE (clockwise from far left) Pip and Greg Rooke. Freshly picked apples on the kitchen bench. Behind a black slatted sliding door is a butler's pantry; the former satisfies Pip's aversion to handles and the latter aids in banishing kitchen mess from view.

"Faithful wife will take no lovers." The sign leaning up outside the Rookes' front door was commissioned by the last emperor of China for his wife (a wife, by the by, who used to call her husband "eunuch").

When Pip Rooke found this relic of conjugal strife for sale in China, she just had to have it. The sign now presides over the home she shares with her husband Greg in the lofty reaches of the Crown Range, the mountains that lie between Queenstown and Wanaka.

The emperor's rebuke at the entrance is the first hint you get of the Eastern homage within. During the couple's 15 years in China (13 in Hong Kong, two in Shanghai), Asia got deep under their skin – so much so that Greg's Chinese colleagues called him an egg: white on the outside, yellow on the inside. This new house of theirs is a little bit eggy too: its sleek, unfussy, modern exterior belies its exquisite Asian-influenced interior.

When the Rookes swapped the clamour of Shanghai for the serenity of the Crown Range last year, it took them a while to acclimatise to the silence. >

THIS PAGE (clockwise from right) Intricate painted detail on one of the dining tables includes faces and Chinese script. A side table displays an antique figurine from Hong Kong and a porcelain globe. Spectacular views make dining outdoors extra special.

"We went from 20 million people to no one," says Pip. "Shanghai is a bizarre place; fabulous in many ways but the pollution was right up to your window every day, seven days a week – it was 24-hour noise."

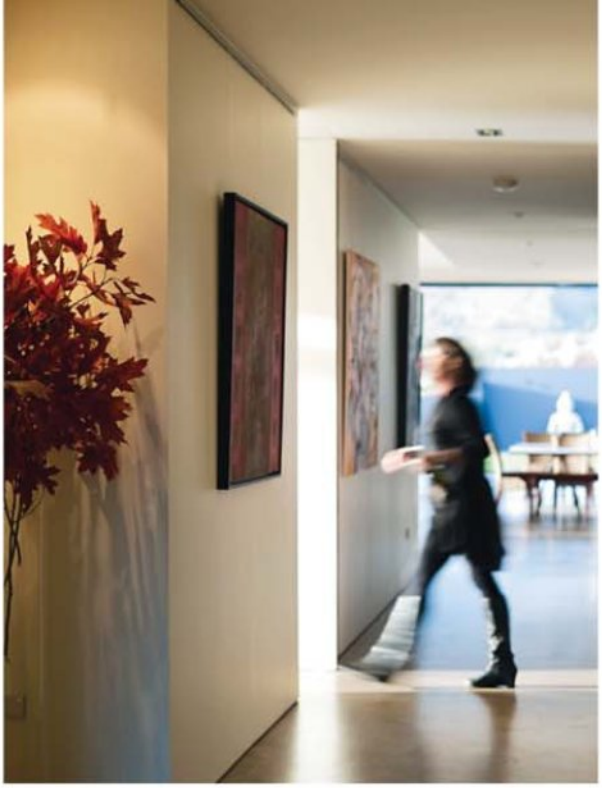
Perched as they are on a corner of farmland just off New Zealand's highest main road, the Rookes now share their rarefied air with just 20 or so other houses. "We're eye-level with the beginning of a mountain range so that's very uplifting," says Pip. "We're actually at the same height as the top of the gondola in Queenstown.

"I love driving down the Crown Range – there'll be somebody paragliding above you, there'll be a helicopter taking off, there'll be a little plane doing barrel rolls. There's just so much activity. And the landscape up here is very undulating. It looks kind of Italian with its swaying poplars – it's not what you'd expect."

Pip's from Canterbury; Greg's from Sydney. Pip's a skier; Greg's a surfer. So, in a perfectly equitable marital equation, they split their time between the snow-happy Crown Range and a beach-hugging house in Sydney. They've even called both homes Pelangi – a Malaysian word meaning "end of the rainbow".

Greg says he still stops at the lookout points when driving up the Crown Range so that he can marvel at the landscape like a tourist. >

In the living room a 2.5m zinc sculpture from Shanghai (far right) presides over the many treasures collected by the couple during their travels; Pip's study can be seen in the background.



THIS PAGE (clockwise from above) The gallery-cum-hallway is the home's central artery. All three bedrooms open to mountain views, with beds originally used in Chinese opium dens. **OPPOSITE** A sculpture from Chang Mai in Thailand adds an exotic touch to the outdoor shower where Greg showers in the alpine air every morning; it's accessed by a glass door from the couple's en suite.

He also salutes the home's splendid isolation by taking in the brisk alpine air under his outdoor shower each morning.

Having spent 15 years trussed up in high white collars as chairman of a company in China, Greg is embracing a new, self-devised dress code. Pip says he's famous among the locals for getting about, mid-winter, in a pair of skimpy shorts and various other seasonally inappropriate outfits (she calls it his cross-dressing habit). "He loves to wear his rugby shorts and things with holes in them because he spent his life in a business suit and cuff links. He thinks it's bliss."

To stay true to the spirit of the alpine farmland they occupy, the Rookes decided against a formal garden and opted instead for the unruly golden delights of tussock. The house is also a pared-down mix: glass, wood and Oamaru stone. In a bid to ensure that the stone was pure cream and free of any auburn streaks, Pip made a trip to the Oamaru quarry armed with home baking.

"I took a big chocolate cake, which was completely unnecessary. When I got to the quarry they weren't the slightest bit interested in meeting me and they said, 'Look, you get what you get with Oamaru stone.' They were men with big cutters and diggers and they were like, 'What are you doing here? This is a bloke's place.' But they were very happy about the chocolate cake. They said, 'Great, pop it in the tearoom.'" Pip did get her auburn-free stone in the end, but whether it was a case of chocolate persuasion she'll never know.

The Rookes gave their architect Murray Cockburn a fairly simple brief: they wanted a long, low home with high ceilings, doors that slid back or pivoted (Pip hates doorknobs with a passion) and a hallway-cum-gallery that could accommodate their large contemporary art collection. Murray answered their brief so perfectly that the house scooped a prize at last year's Southern Architecture Awards for its

"The landscape up here is very undulating. It looks kind of Italian with its swaying poplars – it's not what you'd expect"

artful twinning of home and gallery. But it's not as formal as all that, Pip says. "Being a surfer, Greg wanted to build a beach house in the snow. And he did – sort of. We both got a bit of what we wanted."

They also wanted an interior that wouldn't spar noisily with their prized Asian furnishings and antiques. During their time in China, Pip indulged her love of interior design, travelling to various neighbouring countries to sniff out items of great gorgeousness to export and sell to private clients back in China (she used to sell five containers' worth of gear from her apartment every year).

Keen to introduce others to Asia's artsy-crafty abundance, without being anchored to a retail store, Pip is about to launch a new business venture: an interior styling service that will allow her to remain happily untethered. Her cunning plan is to take groups of New Zealand and Australian clients off to visit the network of trusted merchants and friends she's built up within the Asian region. Under Pip's guidance they'll be able to source unique items for their homes while soaking up the stories and lore associated with their purchases. Sounds like play dressed up as work and she knows it.

Greg, meanwhile, is keen to follow Pip on her Asian adventures. He's even devised a new job description for himself: Faithful Husband Will Carry Wife's Bags.

See more at nzhouseandgarden.co.nz

ABOVE Pip and Greg have difficulty deciding which way to orient their deckchairs: toward Coronet Peak, the Remarkables or the Crown Range.
OPPOSITE TOP The living room doors slide back to maximise indoor-outdoor flow; antique Chinese wine pots sit at the corners of the coloured concrete terrace.
OPPOSITE BOTTOM Greg's office and gym is recessed bunker-style into the hill; the white sculpture sitting outside was made in Thailand.

THIS PAGE The Alessi kettle on the kitchen island in photographer Jackie Meiring's kitchen was a wedding present; the white bowl is from Ritzy Bitz, the lamp from Bauhaus in Parnell and a clock from Askew keeps stylish time on the kitchen blackboard.

OPPOSITE An Arco floor light by Flos curves over a black wicker Pavo chair by Patricia Urquiola from Indice; a white chair from Bauhaus and a George Nelson bench, used as a coffee table, sit on a Bakhtiari carpet from House of Haghi; the red glass bowl by Miki Astori is from Indice.

Light fantastic

An Auckland photographer lives the sweet life in a former chocolate factory on the city fringe

STORY PRUE DASHFIELD / **PHOTOGRAPHS** JACKIE MEIRING

A friend gave Jackie the African kuba cloth that covers the cushions on Philippe Starck's 'Mister' sofa; the painting to the left of the bookcase is a self-portrait by Tracy Payne, an artist friend in Cape Town; Jackie photographed Marc, the male nude above the white chest designed by her brother Andrew; the inflatable lamp on the floor to the left of it is from ECC; Jackie spotted the white dining chairs outside a second-hand store; they were originally in the American Embassy in Cape Town.

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ILFORD FP4 PLUS

The sideboard in the office is a combination of a second-hand metal frame bought in Cape Town and a custom-made drawer and surface; Jackie bought the kimono beside the mock-suede sofa bed at LA's Melrose market. Partial to reassembled animal skins, she had the rug of cowhide rectangles made in Auckland.
LEFT Jackie Meiring in the Pavo chair by Patricia Urquiola.

OPPOSITE (clockwise from top left) A light in the kitchen by South African satirist artist Brett Murray sits above a red fibreglass repro Panton chair from Bauhaus. Afternoon light flows into the living room; the standard lamp by the window is by Rodolfo Dordoni for Artemide and is from Germany. Old opaque glass lampshades accessorise the wall cabinet. Jackie replaces a book; restoration of the old chrome, timber and leather chair beside the bookcase was Alex's project.

Cape Town was beset by so much social unrest that photographer Jackie Meiring and her husband Alex would never have contemplated life near the city centre.

Their last home in the South African city was a smallish apartment; the one before that a Victorian cottage (a villa to New Zealanders) ornamented with the broekie (panty) lace we call wrought iron, and both were a safe-ish distance from Cape Town's troubled heart.

But the couple's more secure life in Auckland brought an opportunity to live on the inner-city fringe and on Parnell's Beach Road they found a 300sqm warehouse that could accommodate a studio for Jackie and a home for them both. They modified the concrete shell into a (rather too) open-plan studio and living space, occupied it for five years, then agreed the time had come to sever life from art. "We both wanted to separate my business from our living," says Jackie.

Her hours were irregular and her work escaped too easily from the loose confines of the studio space into the domain she shared with Alex. There were other incentives to move: the landlord wasn't obliged to subsidise their improvements; the concrete came to feel a little hard; the noise from a busy thoroughfare into the city was too intrusive.

"We wanted slightly softer living," she says. "Something a little more sophisticated."

Over the years, her immediate family, including her parents, have all made their way to Godzone. Jackie's sister and brother-in-law, architects Nicola and Lance Herbst, had settled in an enviable apartment in Parnell's Axis building, the former Nestle factory built in the mid 1920s. Nearly 70 years later it was adapted by architect Andrew Patterson as the mixed-use complex that is home to Cibo restaurant, offices, studios and apartments. Through Nicola and Lance they met another couple-in-residence and, when those friends decided to leave their airy third-floor apartment, they offered it to Jackie and Alex. >

ABOVE The photographs above the wooden chairs from Bauhaus are part of a series Jackie did for an exhibition about life in Cape Town – the models have bindi-like bullet holes between their eyes. Proteas decorate a second-hand chrome table given a new top in Cape Town.
OPPOSITE ABOVE The second-hand timber and frosted glass bedside lights came from Cape Town and the bed cover is from Anami Imports; the doors open to a balcony planted with jasmine and a miniature lemon tree heavy with fruit.
OPPOSITE BELOW The apartment at night.

They didn't think twice. The building, says Jackie, is "a joy to live in".

Aside from painting a low, curved pink wall to match the others – "The default colour in South Africa is white; here it's half 'Spanish White'" – they've hardly changed a thing.

The Axis conversion incorporated much of the building's original fabric but, if there's a matching pair among its warren of business and living spaces, Jackie hasn't seen it yet. As far as she knows, the high-pitched roof with exposed, rough timber rafters is unique to their apartment, as is the floor. There's timber underfoot in the elevated kitchen – "It's performance cooking; you feel as though you're on the Food Channel" – but the rest is paved with the same hexagonal tiles used in the building's exterior spaces, patterning it like a red-brown honeycomb. "It gives the rooms such warmth visually and it's got the patina of its life, the history of what's happened to it, the little chips and scratches."

The high, wide and handsome bookcase, with essential ladder, was also extant. Stocking it has been an incentive to buy books. Lots of them. "We're both avid readers. We should be able to fill it in a couple of years."

The laundry, bathroom, bedroom and office that run along one side are divided by partition walls from a living area bounded by the kitchen at one end and huge, south-facing windows at the other. "The primary beauty of this space is the light," says Jackie.

Nobody knows or cares more about light than a photographer and, although wondrously luminous by day, the apartment wasn't equipped with much in the way of ambient lighting for night. They remedied that in a flash. Now, eight separate light sources, including an inflatable plastic lamp that resembles nothing so much as a stack of plastic lifesavers, Habitat's cute mushroom-shaped affair of wooden slats from her architect brother Andrew's now defunct Design Emporium in Ponsonby, and the Italian,

"I love the combination of quirky and whimsical pieces from the 1950s and 60s with contemporary pieces"

marble-based Arco floor light – "I had wanted that lamp for the last 15 years" – create intimate pockets of light when the sun goes down.

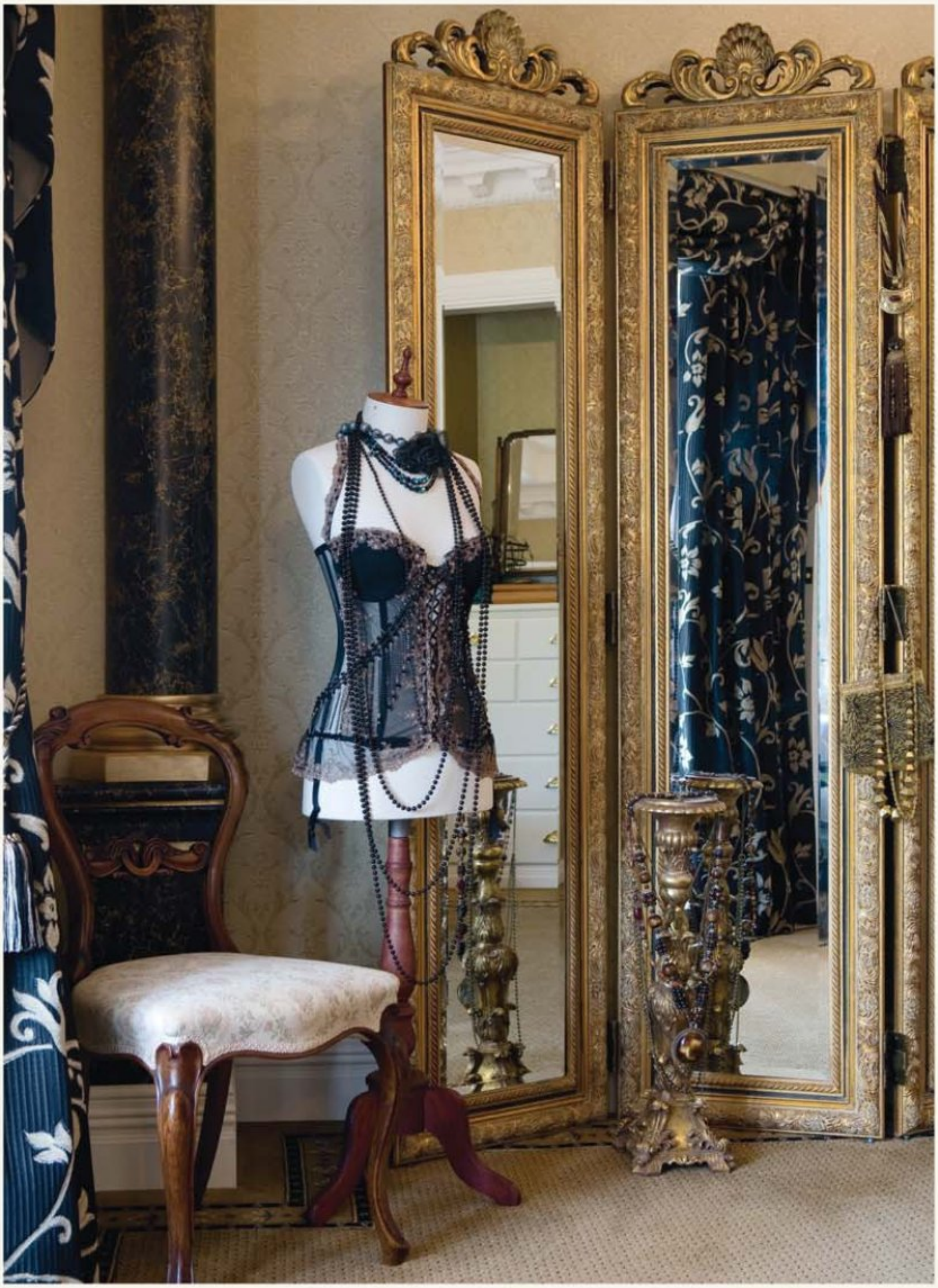
The last is one of four cherished – and not inexpensive – pieces that Jackie and Alex have acquired in the last couple of years. The others are a massive Philippe Starck sofa, the maple-topped Nelson platform bench employed as a coffee table and the Bakhtiari carpet from south-west Iran. "It's a tribal rug, not from a city, so its weave is looser and its style much rarer and more original than other Persian carpets."

Other furniture, much of it mid-century, second-hand and simply but cleverly refurbished, accompanied them from South Africa. "Alex is a keen modernist. I love the combination of quirky and whimsical pieces from the 1950s and 60s with contemporary pieces. It gives you a feeling of history and depth."

Jackie also loves the contrast of soft lines with hard – the sharp edges of furniture against the Arco lamp's womanly curve – and neutral shades animated by shots of rich warm red. "The van Eyck brothers created the perfect red in the 1600s, a kind of royal tomato," she says.

"It's all about natural colours and texture – the texture of wood, of carpet or rugs, and I love the slub in fabric – there's a great light play on it." And always there are flowers – proteas are a favourite, a little bit of South Africa in city-fringe Parnell.

But the lifestyle is urban Auckland. A restaurant and cafe are on site; the weekend's coffee and croissants are enjoyed at the nearby French market; the shops, cafes, bars and amenities of Parnell, Newmarket and the inner city are all about. And Jackie's studio is a five-minute walk away – close, but not too close. ■



Relaxed to the max

Building a home around their many treasures is all part of slowing down for one Te Aroha couple

WORDS SUE HOFFART / **PHOTOGRAPHS** NICOLA TOPPING

THIS PAGE One of the treasures in Bob and Karen Lee's new home is a reworked shadow box, rescued from one of Bob's shop fitting jobs; it now houses precious mementoes. **OPPOSITE** A replica gilt mirror screen and an antique Victorian chair grace a bedroom corner.

ABOVE Karen and Bob Lee with their chihuahua/Japanese chin dogs, brother and sister Sid and Nancy.
LEFT The dining area's Japanese screen was a Tauranga antiques shop find, brought to New Zealand by a US World War II vet.

FORMER CITY DWELLERS Bob and Karen Lee may have reinvented the concept of downtown apartment living. Their home above a former appliance store on the main street of Te Aroha faces a bush-cloaked mountain on one side and lush Waikato pasture on the other. No high-rises. No traffic lights. And the local version of a gridlock occurs when two passing motorists lean out their respective car windows for a chat.

Initially, Karen was unimpressed when Bob suggested they give up their spacious Tauranga home to live on the other side of the Kaimai Range. But, once Bob had lured her over the hill with the promise of a good cafe lunch, she liked what she saw.

"There's a nice feeling in the town," she says. "It's full of life. There are a lot of people like ourselves who've come from other places because they wanted to live somewhere quieter. Now we walk to the gym and the library, the supermarket, the post office. Sometimes the car doesn't go out for two weeks."

When the Lees moved inland six years ago, they were fed up with work pressures and the pace of city life. They liked the idea of cashing up and working less, having more time and more disposable income.

"We got sick of the rat race, the traffic," Bob says. "We talked about it for a long time but where the hell were we going to go? We didn't want to be completely isolated. Here, we're more central. We're not really trapped in a small town – Hamilton is 40 minutes away, Tauranga is 50, Auckland is 90."

So he put his shop fitting business on the back burner and Karen did the same with her busy acupuncture practice. Their first purchase was a 0.8ha property just out of Te Aroha.

Surrounded by bush, it boasted three converging streams and something akin to a botanical garden. But, after six months of relishing the quiet and focusing on relaxing, drinking coffee and sleeping in, they had had enough.

"We looked at one another and said, 'What are we going to do?'" Karen says. "We didn't fancy the idea of being old people who get out and garden every day. Even the dog was depressed. He couldn't see anything but quails. We loved the place but we're not gardeners. We thought we might like to be but it was a dream really."

Deciding on their next move became more pressing once the for sale sign went up; the property sold within a week. >

THIS PAGE (clockwise from top left) The open-plan kitchen features moulded cabinetry made by Bob. A corner of Karen's acupuncture treatment room shows an Asian influence; Bob bought the antique Satsuma vase in Wellington as a gift for Karen. Imported Canadian wallpaper and Kohler 'Russian Teacup' pedestal handbasins add an individual touch to the bathroom. The master bedroom bedspread was specially made to match the curtains.

THIS PAGE (clockwise from top left) One of a pair of lamps designed and made by Bob; the mask on the wall is from New Guinea. The East Timorese bronze statues were brought back from Bali in the Lees' airline carry-on baggage. TradeMe was the source of the entry foyer's chaise longue, which is reputed to have seen many famous bottoms. Bob and Karen enjoy the front balcony. The television in the lounge is cleverly hidden behind a painting. **OPPOSITE** A Czechoslovakian crystal chandelier on the landing is one of several in the apartment. Wrought-iron gates and frosted glasswork designed by Bob make a statement at the street entry.

After much panicked house hunting, they stumbled on a solid and seemingly charmless two-storey commercial building in the middle of town. Bob realised there was room for Karen's acupuncture centre and his workshop, plus a generous section out the back and plenty of scope to develop an apartment upstairs. What's more, the absence of fancy mouldings and architectural frippery gave him leave to create his own masterpiece from a clean slate.

First he found two burly blokes to smash through the thick concrete interior walls and help him haul eight tonnes of debris downstairs and through the front door. They also removed the large 1960s Jesus Loves You picture dating back to the building's earlier days as a youth club venue. Office partitions were torn down and shop fittings removed from the main floor. Only the staircase handrail was deemed worthy of preservation.

Next Bob started work on the framing, structure and door frames. He installed windows, built kitchen fittings and designed everything from pillars to bathroom cabinetry. A small balcony was added to capture evening sunsets at the front of the building; at the back, a conservatory off the master bedroom faces the mountain.

"I've always liked making things," Bob says. "Models, forts in the bush, stuff like that. For me, it was a joy."

The apartment is designed to accommodate a lifetime of treasures and trinkets. Masks and carvings from Asian travels perch alongside antiques and modern pieces.

Bob points out the Chinese Buddha he purchased at the age of 16 after his mother made him return the gun he had bought from an antiques shop. Bob and Karen spent three days bargaining for the Chinese wall plaque that sits on their coffee table and found the old American phone in Ohio, courtesy of an internet auction site.

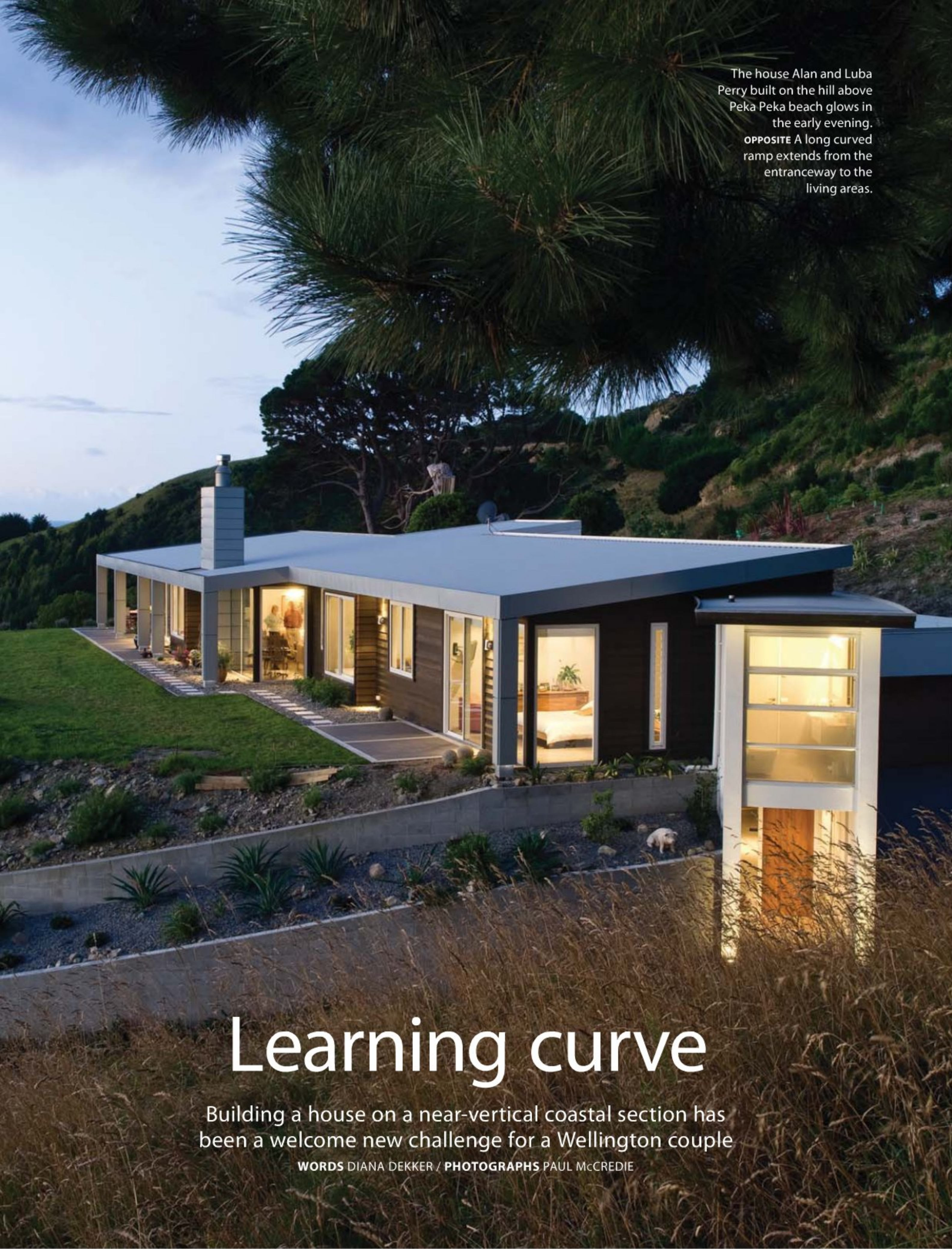
"Our house has been built around stuff we've got rather than the other way round," says Karen. "We haven't gone out and colour-coordinated things to impress the neighbours."

Which launches Bob into his pet hate: "I can't be bothered with this current trend – people who paint their house beige on the inside and beige on the outside and then go and get a coloured vase and plonk it in a corner. People wind up living in houses dressed up for other people.

"I'm sick to death of modernism and minimalism, which today is more about cheapness than good design," he says, before his wife laughingly adds, "Our place is totally maximalist."

Though the Lees have both returned to their respective careers, they now see fewer clients and are spending more time travelling. In between they take their dogs for a stroll through town or head up the road to soak in the hot pools.

"It's a quieter, more relaxed lifestyle," says Bob. "We have more leisure time and people here are friendlier and more helpful because they have more time."
See more at nzhouseandgarden.co.nz ■



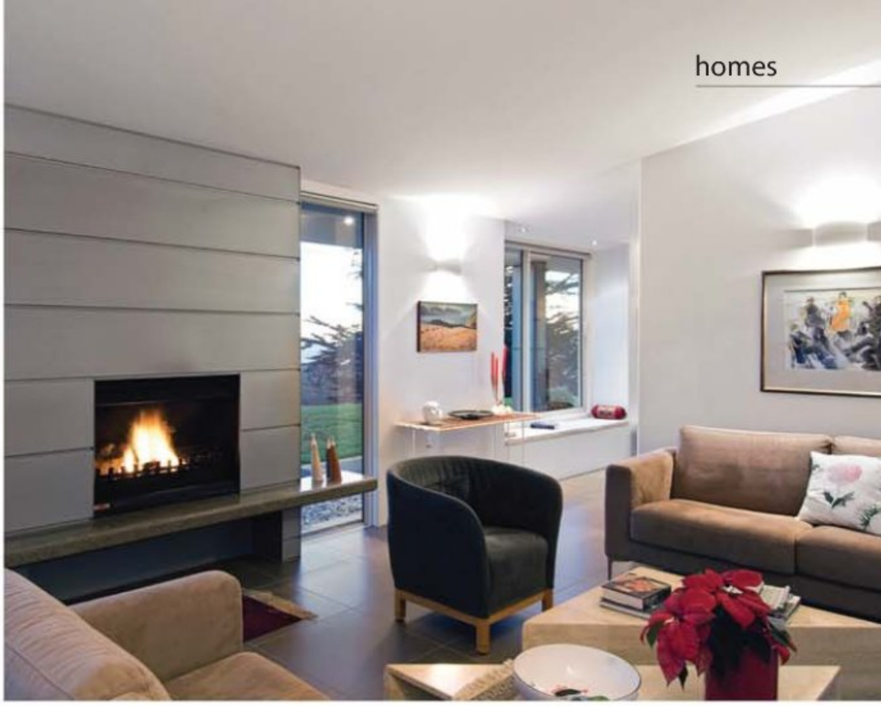
The house Alan and Luba Perry built on the hill above Peka Peka beach glows in the early evening. **OPPOSITE** A long curved ramp extends from the entranceway to the living areas.

Learning curve

Building a house on a near-vertical coastal section has been a welcome new challenge for a Wellington couple

WORDS DIANA DEKKER / **PHOTOGRAPHS** PAUL McCREDIE

THIS PAGE In the living area, a plaster head was made by the Perrys' daughter as a schoolgirl; the painting above is *On Godley Head* by landscape artist Doris Lusk. **OPPOSITE** (from top) Cosy fireside seating. Alan chats to Luba in the kitchen. A nine-metre-long bookcase runs the length of the entry ramp.



BUYING A WINDSWEPT, near-vertical section and building a new house isn't top of the to-do list for most people in their 70s. Everyone said the Perrys were mad to do it. "Brand new section, brand new house, new garden. They were partly right," concedes Alan Perry.

Especially when his wife, Luba, fell over on the steep, rocky site they had owned for just weeks and broke her leg. But today all that is forgotten as the couple survey their partially tamed section and Kapiti's orange evening sky from their wide, low-slung living area.

Alan and Luba Perry were well known in Wellington in the convivial 1980s for their multi-award-winning restaurant Country Life, which butted up against the main road just before Waikanae in a flurry of green. An eatery is still there in a different guise.

Country Life used to be a favourite of corporate high-spenders, though it was initially patronised by friends and friends-of-friends of Alan and Luba and their partners. They decided to open the restaurant with the same optimistic enthusiasm with which they later decided on the house. Their philosophy then and now: "Let's do it. Let's throw caution to the wind." After all, Luba liked entertaining and cooking and Alan had an excellent collection of wine.

"It seemed an easy thing to do," says Luba, "but a restaurant and dinner parties are two different things."

But both ventures turned out perfectly. The restaurant acquired a peerless reputation and the design and building of the house have gone equally well. Alan says they managed, through a combination of luck and application, to gather a pleasant team around them.

"It was all very happy. Quite rare I think." It helped that he trained as a quantity surveyor in Britain before emigrating to New Zealand, where he met Russian-born Luba. Both arrived in the 1950s.

They have lived at Peka Peka since their "great 10 years" running the restaurant. At first, home was a beach house to which they added before building another on the same spot. Eventually the neighbours subdivided and they decided on a shift. >

ABOVE Alan sits on the patio from which, on a clear day, Mt Egmont can be seen. In the cleverly designed bathroom, the tub is tucked behind the basin and mirror. **OPPOSITE** Like the rest of the house, the master bedroom has a breathtaking view: Mana Island can be seen to the left, and Kapiti Island to the right.

"We saw brand new houses on beautiful sections but the houses were terrible and, because we'd lived in a nice house, we became disenchanted," says Alan. "We saw the section up here two years ago and decided to go for it. I can't think of a better place to live. It's perfect and it looks out over this view." A view, says Luba, that they hope never to take for granted.

They wanted a house built on one level, with an easy entry that evolved as a long, sloping, curving ramp at the back which runs from the interior garage door to the living area. The ramp looks great and is practical but, Alan says, it caused "a few headaches" for architectural designer Darren Hunter, Cameron Builders and the local tilers who had to tailor and fit hundreds of tiles to line the curving walls and floors of the adjacent master en suite and the ramp itself.

Alongside the ramp runs an elegant and similarly curved nine-metre-long bookshelf laden with Luba's books, Alan's magazines and piles of well-thumbed cookery books.

The open living rooms merge into one another beyond. Glazing that stretches the width of the house is punctuated with an indoor/outdoor zinc chimney, the work of friend and craftsman Hartmut Reichelt, who also fashioned the outdoor metal columns and fascia.

At the far end of the house is "Luba's room", though so far the name is just a reminder of the reading and relaxation she intends to indulge in there when she has the time. >

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ABOVE Alan and Luba enjoy eating on the sheltered patio on summer evenings: Luba grew the gourds displayed on the table.

The couple has bought little new furniture for the house apart from two modern kitchen stools which stand by the island in a kitchen that is a streamlined sweep of stainless steel and handle-free cupboards.

Underneath a large portrait by Irene A'Court of their two little granddaughters – now grown up – is an antique oak dresser bought "years ago. We have to treat it gently," says Luba. "We quite like old bits and pieces in new houses."

The Eames chair in the living room is "years old. We haven't bought anything because we don't need anything and I don't want to change things for the sake of it," says Luba, though Alan does admit to a predilection for new kitchens and bathrooms. "Even now I look at showrooms to see what we missed out on," says Alan.

All the floors are covered with mocha-coloured tiles, giving a streamlined look that harbours no surprises. Luba recalls the horror of pulling up a carpet in their previous house and seeing what had collected underneath.

Outside, landscaping work continues, but in a less frenzied manner. "If we need to bring stones or topsoil up in a wheelbarrow, we take it easy," says Luba.

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Native grace

Formal design and indigenous plantings combine in a glorious garden development outside Christchurch

WORDS ADRIENNE REWI / **PHOTOGRAPHS** DANIEL ALLEN

FROM THE TOP of an artificial hillock in David Hobbs' garden development there is a bird's-eye view of his achievement. Stretching out in all directions, Broadfields has colonised four and a half hectares on the outskirts of Christchurch.

It's a labyrinth of formal elements, designed by Christchurch landscape architect Robert Watson and lovingly executed by David over the last 15 years. Before that, it was a bare paddock – part of a 24ha plot that David bought in 1993 to sell as lifestyle blocks.

From the outset, Broadfields was intended to be a major project that would be open to the public to visit and enjoy. There's no house on the property; David and his wife Jackie live on a 28ha block at nearby Lincoln.

"Broadfields was intended to be a job for my old age – a job that I'm now qualified for," says David with a wry smile. "It was to be a hobby I could work on in weekends, so Robert had to come up with a garden that could be maintained by one person."

It's the devotion to New Zealand flora that makes Broadfields so excitingly different from most other gardens of its scale. Native species flourish in a wide variety of settings and, where colour has been called for, David has planted New Zealand-bred varieties of exotics.

"People don't come here to see a Japanese or English garden, they come to see a Christchurch garden, so we feature New Zealand plants.

"There's a misconception that native plants are slow-growing but when totara or kauri are left to their own devices they can grow half a metre a year. >

ABOVE A pond has been carefully positioned to form a focal point. **OPPOSITE** (clockwise from top) The view from "Hobbs Hill" – a man-made hillock at one end of the property – takes in the garden's maze-like expanse. Closely planted beech and broadleaf trees form a cool thicket. David with Russell the boxer, who has now passed away. **PREVIOUS PAGES** Feathery clumps of *Carex secta* punctuate the circular end of a 100-metre-long canal. The water introduces movement and reflection into the garden.

THIS PAGE (from top left) *Magnolia* 'Athene', along with camellias, rhododendrons, azaleas and flowering cherries, periodically shower colour through the less showy foliage of native plantings. Long, wide, grassy avenues lead visitors on a plantsman's journey. A stone sculpture was installed in the garden in memory of the family's much-loved boxer Russell. **OPPOSITE** *Prunus* 'Peggy Wilson' hangs in a delicate, lacy umbrella of blossom over one corner of the rhododendron garden.

"I've planted a kauri forest and a decade on it's a very meaningful group of trees."

He has planted between 7000 and 11,000 trees so far and as visitors make their way through the intricate network of hedges there are plenty of surprises. More than 500 camellias and 500 rhododendrons, hybridised and registered in New Zealand, are massed together for a spectacular spring display. Swathes of azaleas cuddle up to natives and the deciduous woodland features New Zealand-raised varieties of crab apple, cherry, ash and maple planted over the last four years.

For David, the hedges are an integral part of the garden design. They lend weight and scale while at the same time creating an elegant network of long avenues that lead to 20 different gardens.

"We initially planted two kilometres of poplar hedging within the garden for shelter," says David. "That has since been cut down but we still have close to one and a half kilometres of internal hedging."

Two different types of totara – *Podocarpus cunninghamii* and *Podocarpus totara* – are the dominant hedge species. David chose them for their longevity, the fact that they are evergreen and because, like yew, they regenerate from a stump.

He has aimed for the relatively simple design ethic he so admires in renowned United Kingdom landscape designer Russell Page's gardens – "restrained plantings handled with substantial sophistication" – but he says there is still plenty to do at Broadfields. There's no such thing as a static garden. >

THIS PAGE (from top) A line of kahikatea *Dacrycarpus dacrydioides* echoes the elegant symmetry of the waterway and enclosing hedges. The unruly tops of *Carex secta* grasses break up the formality of the rose garden. Rimu, lancewood and New Zealand conifers form an unexpected partnership with thousands of spring daffodils.

"Whenever I walk around the garden I am always looking for what needs to be done next. I do have a sense of satisfaction when I see the way it's coming together but that doesn't last through 15 years of hard work. You have to be motivated to keep the momentum going."

As we walk down one long avenue and head into the next, a large hare darts in front of us and David's dog gives chase. The bird life is alive and well too. Native plantings have encouraged the presence of large numbers of silvereyes, fantails and grey warblers and the 100m-long canal is home to hundreds of goldfish.

Through another hedge and into the camellia garden there's a sign that says, "For Sale: Weeds. Pick Your Own". It's a joke of course but you can understand why it's there. These days David spends every Saturday working on garden maintenance, helped by his son Nick, 22, and husband and wife team Dave and Denise Falls.

"We spend the equivalent of one person working full-time in the garden. The lawn mowing takes four hours each week."

David is quite content with the workload, finding it light relief after his busy working week. "Broadfields is my mental therapy, my respite from the harsh realities of weekly office routines. I don't get a lot of time to relax in the garden. My time here is all about keeping on top of things and we have to work pretty determinedly on Saturdays to keep it in reasonable shape. But this is about creating something, whereas my workdays are about intellectual pursuits."

The garden is open to visitors every Saturday or by arrangement and David enjoys showing people through. "You just have to watch their responses and listen and you learn things about your garden you've never noticed or thought of yourself. I like that."

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Paddock to paradise

Time and a passion for rhododendrons have transformed a patch of rural Christchurch into a suburban arcadia

WORDS ADRIENNE REWI / **PHOTOGRAPHS** JULIET NICHOLAS

ABOVE Each spring, four trees of the late-flowering *Prunus* 'Accolade' shower the driveway with a spectacular display of candyfloss-pink blossoms. **RIGHT** Thickets of azaleas add to the colourful spring palette of the driveway gardens along with daffodils, hellebores, aquilegias and grape hyacinths at ground level.

ABOVE A pretty unnamed rhododendron cross.
LEFT A large gleditsia tree provides a golden-yellow backdrop for the thriving rhododendron hybrid 'White Pearl'.

When Mark and Liz Lewis bought their Ilam property, Holmdene, 27 years ago, it was surrounded by horse paddocks. There were a few trees in the garden and one rhododendron. Today, however, Holmdene is firmly entrenched in suburban Christchurch and the couple's passion for rhododendrons has blossomed into a collection of many hundreds of species and hybrids.

Every spring the garden bursts into a voluptuous display of blooms. For the rest of the year the rhododendrons' huge range of leaf colour and texture adds a unique quality to what is essentially a woodland garden in the city.

Mark's happy to confess that he's "into rhodos in a big way". Back in the early days of establishing the garden he joined the Rhododendron Association so he could find out what plants were available and how they performed. In no time he was breeding his own hybrids.

"Rhododendrons are so diverse," he explains. "There are species and hybrids and they have numerous leaf shapes and colours and different types of flowers – scented or unscented. The different types flower from July through to Christmas."

Twenty years on from his first breeding experiments, whole areas of the garden are filled with Mark's mature rhododendron hybrids. They line one side of the driveway and many of the species he has grown from seed take pride of place in the species garden on the east side of the house.

Mark and Liz both work in the garden with equal enthusiasm: he takes care of the rhododendrons and she turns her attention to the underplanting.

"I collect a lot of different plants – trilliums, hellebores, Chatham Island forget-me-nots, peonies, Mt Peel lilies – the things that do really well in a shady, tree-filled garden like this," says Liz. >

ABOVE Liz and Mark Lewis.
OPPOSITE The rhododendron hybrid 'The Master' droops its pale pink bracts over forget-me-nots on the left of this garden path; the deep red hybrid 'Grace Seabrook' can be seen on the right.

"We always look forward to spring when the garden's at its best... It's also lovely to take a break from work and come home and 'smell the roses'"

"It's very much a spring garden with a heavy focus on foliage. We both love trees and we've mixed in all our favourites – dogwoods, pin oaks, maples, *Michelia*, ginkgo and weeping elms. I have also planted a lot of daffodils that came from my parents' South Canterbury country garden and they burst into flower along with the deciduous azaleas, wood anemones, delphiniums, irises, camellias, the wisteria along the front fence and the flowering cherries that line the driveway. It's a real picture then."

A formal rose bed guards the front door and there's a bountiful rose arbour at the rear of the house, but Mark and Liz agree that the garden is ruled by their passion for rhododendrons. He no longer has much time for plant breeding but the garden is still his special retreat.

"We always look forward to spring when it's at its best," he says. "But it's also lovely to take a break from work at lunch time, come home and 'smell the roses'."

The third of a hectare garden that Liz calls "our little piece of the country in the city" has been designed around a number of distinct areas. They are delineated by the driveway and tennis courts, the front lawn and a number of solid brick walls, charming gateways and leaf-enshrouded garden paths.

There is also a large potager area tucked away – almost a secret – in the north-east corner of the property, behind the rhododendron species garden. It's centred on a cluster of old sheds Mark now uses for propagating.

"In the beginning," says Mark, "we selected the best seed and plant material we could from New Zealand, the United States and England and, as a result of extensive breeding, most of our hybrids are unique to this garden."

But it's the species rhododendrons – the original uncrossed varieties – of which Mark is most fond. He has a soft spot for *R. pachysanthum* which has beautiful foliage, pink buds and white flowers with spotted throats. He also favours *R. roxieanum* var. *oreonastes* for its narrow, elongated leaves, cinnamon-coloured on the underside, and *R. grande* makes an impression with its huge leaves (up to 30cm long) and its trumpet-like trusses of lemon-pink flowers.

"And you can't go past the scented varieties," adds Liz. "I like the New Zealand hybrid 'Floral Dance' which is heavily perfumed. We have a whole bed of scented loderi hybrids near the driveway and they smell heavenly in the mornings and evenings."

Mark and Liz acknowledge the late Ron Coker and his wife Molly – local rhododendron authorities – as their major gardening inspirations. "They had a magnificent rhododendron garden not far from here and I received a lot of encouragement from Ron and Molly in the early days when I first started plant breeding," says Mark.

"We have loderi hybrids named after them both which makes a nice commemoration, especially as their garden has given way to the expansion of the College of Education."

Mark and Liz can still be inspired by a stroll through the nearby Canterbury University rhododendron and azalea gardens but they always enjoy coming home to their own patch.

"It's marvellous to sit on the verandah in the evening and look out on the fruits of all your hard labour," says Liz.

Mark agrees: "It's such good therapy for the soul." ■

LEFT In front of the house, cream aquilegias dance at the feet of a rhododendron hybrid 'Fragrantissimum'. **BELOW** The creamy-pink flowering *R. yakushimanum* var. *yaku angel* originated on the Japanese island of Yakushima. **OPPOSITE** (clockwise from top left) The rhododendron hybrid 'Lem's 121' has a lemon-flushed throat and a pretty pink delicacy. The scarlet blooms of *R.* 'Red Walloper' and the soft ivory tones of the hybrid 'Ivan D. Wood' battle for attention. The rose 'Bantry Bay' has colonised the side of an old tin shed.

Long division

An architect's flourish and a gardener's hard work have made the most of a lengthy Auckland backyard

WORDS ROSE THODEY / **PHOTOGRAPHS** GIL HANLY

THIS PAGE Richard Harris' design embraces the long, narrow section. **OPPOSITE** (clockwise from top) Ordered formality in the entrance garden. Crab apple blossom promises a rich autumn harvest. A modern take on a traditional cast-iron gate. Clivias bloom brilliantly in spring.

THIS PAGE A glimpse of the park draws visitors down the long lawn to the gate, where the sea view is revealed. **OPPOSITE** (clockwise from top left) The 'Jack Humm' crab apple has been kept well pruned. A Japanese maple contrasts with star jasmine used as groundcover. Delicate clusters of 'Shimidsu Sakura' cherry blossom. *Astelia chathamica* 'Silver Spear' underplanted with star jasmine. Richard and Brenda Harris beneath the fragrant frangipani tree. An added deck provides outdoor living space off the kitchen/living area.

When Richard and Brenda Harris moved into their circa 1911 Herne Bay villa in Auckland nearly 30 years ago they could see the sea from the house. But over the years a house built nearby and maturing trees have come close to blocking the view completely.

Richard, president of the New Zealand Institute of Architects (NZIA) and a director at Jasmax, accepts such changes as part of a natural evolutionary process. He was equally pragmatic when it came to designing a garden within the confines of their long, narrow section. His approach, he says, has been "to emphasise and play to the length".

As might be expected from an architect, the garden's overall design is simple, crisp and uncluttered, beautifully proportioned and highly practical. But it also contains an intriguing sense of mystery, an invitation to discover what lies beyond.

The linear nature of the long lawn is deliberately embraced in the design, to give "the feel of a river flowing down to the park beyond". Here the sea view is revealed once more, unfolding beneath the lower branches of a magnificent pohutukawa.

It was in this park beyond – the Salisbury Reserve – that the Harrises' three sons, Julian, Simon and James, spent day and night as they were growing up, whizzing down two water slides placed end to end and playing cricket, football and other games with the neighbourhood children.

"I had an old bell and I used to stand on the back steps and ring it when it was time for the boys to come home for dinner," says Brenda.

A mature Australian frangipani tree casts dappled shade over a sunny deck extending from the kitchen/living area. The tree is kept trimmed to preserve the sun and views of their neighbour, former mayor and governor-general Cath Tizard. As a result, it flowers more prolifically and all parties get to enjoy the fabulous fragrance close at hand.

Below the deck is a handy sleepout, long since commandeered by one of the boys. >

The garden's overall design is simple, crisp and uncluttered... but it also contains a sense of mystery, an invitation to discover what lies beyond

"We can sit on the verandah with our coffee and people passing by look into the garden but can't see us through the crab apple"

The sleepout is covered in the glossy green foliage of *Distictis buccinatoria*, or Mexican blood trumpet, a subtropical climber bearing brilliant red flowers with yellow throats. "Living proof of the legend that this plant flowers well in view of the sea," says Richard.

Beyond the sleepout, Richard has cleverly accommodated Brenda's request for a clothes line long enough to dry large cotton sheets by hiding it behind a concrete wall. To the rear of this is another wall hiding a "secret garden" tucked in behind. Here a curving path of smooth pebbles satisfies Brenda's other requirement – surfaces that can be walked on barefoot. A group of subtropical *Neomarica caerulea* has proved a winner with its ongoing displays of sky blue iris-like flowers. But Richard rues the day he brought home a plant of *Acanthus,* or bear's breeches, as it has turned into a thuggish weed.

A coat of paint has transformed a utilitarian shed at the back of the garden into a green wall and it is now effectively covered with the native climber *Tecomanthe speciosa* and Boston ivy. "Nothing would stick until we painted it," says Brenda, "and a concrete wall was just the same until I painted it grey and then a climbing fig or *Ficus* finally began to adhere to it."

A series of hedges along the side boundaries includes a single Norfolk Island hibiscus tree, clipped to spread on either side of the trunk into a solid hedge shape. Otherwise, *Griselinia*

littoralis predominates, with bay and box used extensively as internal hedging.

The deck has been built at the right height for people to walk underneath, providing necessary access along one side of the section. "In the spring a purple wisteria contrasts beautifully with the dark green foliage and bright orange clivia flowers," says Brenda.

But the entrance garden is her favourite spot, with its red sasanqua camellias underplanted with white impatiens, *Prunus* 'Shimidsu Sakura' (flowering cherry), lilac-blue jacaranda and a heavily fruiting 25-year-old 'Jack Humm' crab apple.

"We can sit on the verandah with our coffee and people passing by look into the garden but can't see us through the crab apple, it's been so heavily pruned," she says. Other exotics include a pair of 'Mop Top' robinias used as a screen and a brilliantly coloured Japanese maple.

Extensive use of mondo grass, star jasmine and Brenda's favourite *Ajuga* 'Jungle Beauty' as groundcover establishes a recurring theme throughout the garden. By limiting the variety of plants and their colours to a simple array of purple/blue, orange and red flowers, the couple has created a sense of tranquillity and a place of respite.

Though he is the acknowledged designer of the garden, Richard gives full credit to Brenda as the gardener.

"She constantly continues after dark and I joke about bringing out a headlamp for her. She is like that at our place at Omaha too."

Because Brenda works four days a week with international students at Diocesan School for Girls, the couple now employs gardener Gill Kersey to help with regular maintenance. The hedges are also trimmed by professionals.

Like most people, Brenda and Richard used to toss around ideas about where they might live in future, but they have made the decision to stay in the house.

"When Julian came back from Shanghai recently he kept saying, 'It's so green'. That's what we appreciate about it – that lush greenness and being able to watch the birds and smell the star jasmine wafting in our bedroom window," says Brenda. "The garden at Omaha is full of coastal native plants such as flax. This garden is much more refined and that's what we like about it." ■

THIS PAGE Brenda enjoys the morning sun on the verandah. The dark blue flowering perennial *Ajuga reptans* 'Jungle Beauty' has been used to line a curving path in the secret garden. **OPPOSITE** (clockwise from top left) At the end of the washing-line lawn, a concrete block wall covered in a climbing fig hides the secret garden. A clipped wedge of *Buxus sempervirens* cleverly resolves the angle of the path leading to the front door. Steps lead down behind the wall into the secret garden.

Method and madness

The Woodham garden in Hawke's Bay is an orchestrated riot of form and colour

STORY VIVIENNE HALDANE / **PHOTOGRAPHS** GIL HANLY

THIS PAGE A "very special" trip to painter Claude Monet's garden at Giverny, France, was the inspiration for John and Sally Woodham's cottage-style Haumoana garden.
OPPOSITE A prickly pear cactus makes a bold statement next to the orange-painted pump house.

LEFT The contemporary style of the house is emphasised by Colorsteel cladding; conical planters on the deck were designed by John.
BELOW LEFT *Agave americana* lines the path.
OPPOSITE (clockwise from top left) The orange-flowering *Aloe chabaudii.* A trio of *Aloe polyphylla*. John and Sally Woodham. Windmill and Washington palms (*Washingtonia robusta*) enhance the strong lines of the house and water rill.

ONCE UPON A time, John and Sally Woodham lived in an old but charming cottage and green-fingered Sally planted a rambling cottage garden to match. Secretly, though, she harboured dreams of a garden full of cacti and succulents and went about accumulating a fine collection, in spite of having nowhere to display it.

Then, in 1995 the Woodham family, including children Tom, Matthew and Emma, moved into a brand new house designed by John, who admits he's always had a yen to be an architect. Built on the same property at Haumoana in Hawke's Bay, it couldn't have been more different from its predecessor. It was modern, clad with Colorsteel, with lots of windows, decks and outdoor living spaces.

The old cottage was demolished and the only remnant is its fireplace, now incorporated into an outdoor living area. "We practically live here in summer, beneath this lovely plane tree that I planted as a twig 25 years ago," says John.

Sally was able to plan the garden she'd long contemplated, using the exotic plants she admired. "I've always been attracted to the strong forms of architectural plants – they're so quirky and virtually look after themselves."

Together John and Sally worked to create a new landscape in keeping with the modern lines of their "steel shed". Says Sally: "We put a lot of thought into making a garden that would complement the contemporary style of our new house, yet link with the older garden. I still wanted to be able to go out and pick my roses and perennials." >

JOHN AND SALLY'S PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHED BY VIVIENNE HALDANE

ABOVE A kinetic sculpture, made by John as a birthday present for Sally, is surrounded by a low buxus hedge and spruce trees. **RIGHT** The water feature in action. Outdoor living centres on an old chimney – the last remnant of the Woodhams' original cottage. **OPPOSITE** (top and bottom) The magnolia 'Vulcan' and a Japanese flowering cherry (*Prunus* 'Shimidsu Sakura') dominate a mixed border. Different heights and textures add interest to the woodland of Irish yew and *Taxodium* (swamp cypress) trees.

"We put a lot of thought into making a garden that would complement the contemporary style of our new house, yet link with the older garden"

Part of the solution was to create varied themes, such as topiaried borders of buxus and lonicera, groupings of Japanese cherry trees and conifers on one lawn and crazily shaped Doctor Seuss-like kaizuka trees on another. At the far end of the garden a stand of pin oaks and redwoods creates a woodland setting.

In front of their new house they laid out a pebble garden of limestone chips and planted Washington and windmill palms (*Trachycarpus fortunei*) along the perimeter.

"We bought these palms cheaply a few years ago as tiny plants. They have taken a while to establish because it's cold here in winter," says Sally. The spiky rosettes of *Agaves variegata* and *americana* provide a dramatic accent and mass-planted aloes soak up the sun in summer and shoot out wands of bright orange flowers.

At last Sally was able to give rein to her love affair with zany plants. She now has a huge range of succulent euphorbias and cacti, including opuntia (prickly pear), which bears "fabulous purple fruit".

"Some cacti and agaves have such vicious spikes they would be good planted under your daughters' windows or on a prison boundary," says John, laughing.

A trip to the Ellerslie Flower Show provided inspiration at a time when the couple were mulling over their next move. "We wanted a focal point for the courtyard and we saw a water table that gave us an idea," says Sally. "When we came home, John drew up plans that included a feature of stepped, black walls – the result is stunning." >

LEFT Sally's favourite cutting garden is backed by a mature *Robinia* 'Mop Top'.
BELOW LEFT John and Sally Woodham.
OPPOSITE (top and bottom) A path leads past topiary-defined "rooms" filled with flowers and into the woodland garden of pin oaks, magnolias and redwoods. A collar of buxus around a golden elm tree.

Unable to find what she wanted locally, Sally went in search of the right plants to sit alongside the water rill.

"To give you an idea of the measure of Sally's madness," says John, "she drove to the other side of Whangarei and back, all in one day, just to buy a particular type of bromeliad."

Sally, who runs her own physiotherapy business in Havelock North, spends as much time outdoors as possible, going out into the garden "umpteen times a day". She loves to see the different views from various vantage points around the property and John jokes that "the plants here have roller skates underneath, as Sally is constantly moving them around".

After seeing Sally struggling with a heavy garden sack one day, the ever-inventive John made a wheeled frame for it and soon orders for them were flowing in. It was the beginning of a new career in manufacturing.

Some time later, after one of her many trips to the garden centre, Sally declared, "You've got to design better trolleys – the ones they have are just terrible!" Designs for plant trolleys and display stands followed, selling well in New Zealand and Australia. Now, Woodham Manufacturing exports products worldwide.

"I'm now officially allowed to go to garden centres, as we sell our products there," says Sally with a laugh. "And at last I'm starting to get some of my money back!" counters John.

Though it's the design side of the garden that John relishes most, he also lends a hand with its maintenance. Sally keeps him away from hedge-trimming duties, though. "He doesn't look where

JOHN AND SALLY'S PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHED BY VIVIENNE HALDANE

his big feet are going and there's always so much cursing and swearing from him tangling with rose thorns."

Once a year a big machine trims and spruces up the magnificently tall Leyland cypress hedge that wraps around the property, protecting it from prevailing winds and the busy road. "I had to fight for this lovely green wall," says Sally. "John wanted to be able to see out, but I wanted the privacy and eventually I got my way. I know he enjoys it too."

In August, Sally and John will travel to a garden centre trade fair in Chicago (the Independent Garden Centre Show) to showcase their products – it will be the first time they've tested the American market. And, more than likely, the pair, who thrive on sparking off each another, will return with more imaginative ideas for their continually evolving garden. ■

Before you criticise someone, you should walk a mile in their shoes. That way, when you criticise them, you're a mile away and you have their shoes. ” Borrow money from a pessimist. They don't expect it back. ” Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day. Teach him how to fish and he will sit in a boat all day drinking beer. ” I am not a vegetarian because I love animals. I'm a vegetarian because I hate plants. ” I used to be indecisive, now I'm not so sure. ” If at first you don't succeed, skydiving is definitely not for you. ” A diplomat is someone who can tell you to go to hell in such a way that you will look forward to the trip. ” If you think nobody cares that you're alive, try missing a couple of phone payments. ” Laughing stock: cattle with a sense of humour. ” Shin: a device for finding furniture in the dark. ” Why is abbreviated such a long word? ” Why isn't phonetic spelled the way it sounds? ” Two antennas get married. The ceremony was pretty dull but the reception was excellent. ” What's orange and sounds like a parrot? A carrot. ”

Feel free to laugh with TENA

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SCZ3566

Down to earth

Christchurch's Barry Gadsby was keen to share his love of native plants with the neighbours

WORDS ADRIENNE REWI / **PHOTOGRAPHS** GIL HANLY

ABOVE A mix of native grasses, shrubs, trees and ferns spills over the edge of Barry's private courtyard at the rear of the Cornwall Gardens complex. **RIGHT** Barry Gadsby.

BARRY GADSBY'S TINY Christchurch garden is a testament to his passion for native flora. Located at the rear of Cornwall Gardens – one of New Zealand's first townhouse complexes, designed by architect Peter Beaven and built in 1975 – it's the culmination of 34 years of hard work.

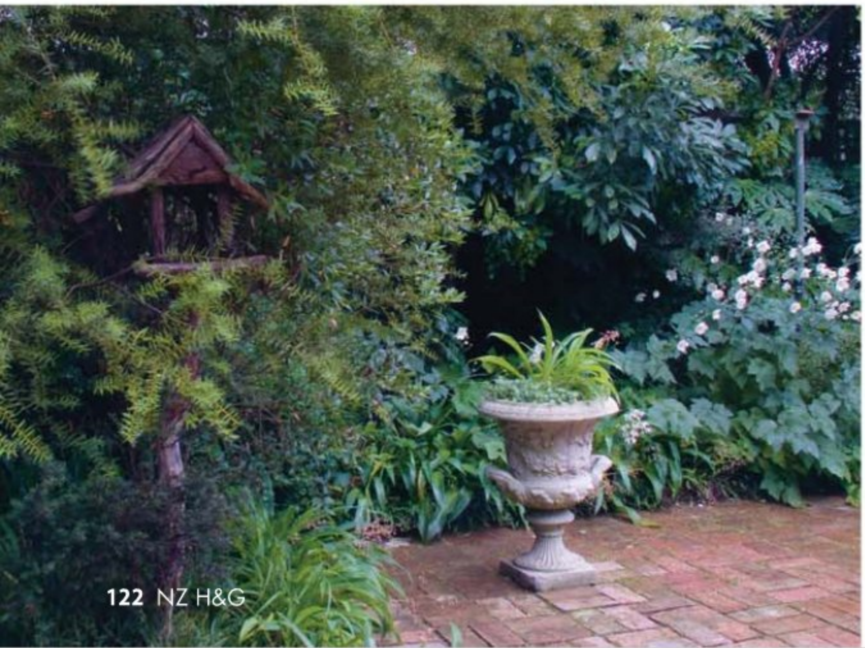
Barry was a fan of native plantings long before they became fashionable again. In the 1960s he had been working as personal assistant to acclaimed Scottish author Alistair MacLean but, after nine years living in England and Beverly Hills in the US, Barry wanted nothing more than to return home and set up his own place, complete with a native garden.

Back in Christchurch he purchased one of the larger townhouses beside St Albans Stream in the Cornwall Gardens complex. At the same time he and a business partner bought Sign of the Takahe, a popular restaurant in a historic building high in the Cashmere Hills, which they ran for seven years.

Barry also began working as personal assistant to Hannahs Shoes heiress Sheilah Winn. >

PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPH: GUY FREDERICK

"It's been a delight to witness the return of native



A patron of the arts, she established Wellington's Hannah Playhouse and the annual event now known as the University of Otago Sheilah Winn Shakespeare Festival. It's a position Barry held for 26 years until Sheilah's death in 2001.

Despite a busy working life, he lavished attention on his garden and today it's a multi-award-winning plot that boasts a multitude of native species growing over three tiers under a lush, evergreen canopy that includes totara, kauri, lancewood and several thousand ferns.

"I also have more than 30 native orchids growing off the middle branches and when they flower in February and March the evening perfume here is amazing. I had 60 flower stems in my best year."

But in 2004, when Barry decided he wanted to extend his garden plantings through the complex and along the stream banks behind it, he met with resistance. "The other owners weren't keen on the idea – they wanted flowers."

Undeterred, he spoke individually with the 17 other residents in the complex and gradually talked them round. When the revamped Cornwall Gardens was opened by Christchurch mayor Garry Moore in 2006, the residents presented Barry with a framed letter of thanks for his efforts. A kauri tree was planted to mark the occasion and a bronze plaque placed nearby.

The gardens have since gone on to win numerous awards – among them a Civic Trust Award for the garden's rebirth – and Barry is thrilled that another pocket of native vegetation is now thriving in the central city.

"It was a huge job but one that was made easier by the assistance we received from Christchurch City Council. I approached them early on and they were right behind the project," he says. "We took out 25 140-foot-high Lombardy poplars and the council supplied hundreds of native trees and shrubs – more than 70 different species – plus the help of their landscape gardener, Jeff Weston. He and I worked with two other gardeners. It took us 18 months."

THIS PAGE (from the top) The three-tiered native bush plantings in Barry's own garden suggest something far more expansive. The focal point of the garden is the elegant white canvas pavilion and a formal fish pond. In the paved rear courtyard, planted urns set off the native greenery; a rustic bird house is a Mecca for birds.

birds to Cornwall Gardens”

Three years on, the stream banks are a thriving habitat for native birds, lizards, eels and insects. “It’s been a delight to witness the return of native birds to Cornwall Gardens. When we did the planting, the council brought in five lorry loads of mulch, so the plants have taken off. We can’t see any neighbours and there is a very real sense of ‘being in the bush’ when I sit in my living room. There are birds hopping through the branches all day.”

Cornwall Gardens and Barry’s own garden have won Native Garden Awards from the Canterbury Horticultural Society and, as we walk through the inner-city townhouse complex, he’s happy to report that the hard work has been worth it.

“Once you could see our poplars from Cathedral Square. They were a landmark. Now we look forward to the time when people will be able to see our totara and kauri from afar. This has always been a project that looks to the future.” ■

The gravel pathway leads from the courtyard and through the bush garden that borders St Albans Stream; native plantings now extend along the stream banks throughout the Cornwall Gardens complex.

In today’s economy...

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A huge etched glass chalice holds a profusion of *Helleborus x orientalis* stems with their own foliage. Chalice from Le Forge, 0800 533 6743; other accessories stylist's own.

Ice queen

Hellebores in a multitude of subtle shades are stars of the winter garden

WORDS ROSE THODEY **STYLING** FIONNA HILL **PHOTOGRAPHS** KELLEY EADY LOVERIDGE

Hellebores, commonly known as winter roses, have an elegant simplicity that belies their rugged nature. Years of dedicated breeding have produced an array of colours from almost black through deep burgundy wine to rose pink, apple green, primrose yellow, apricot and the pure white of 'Christmas Rose', plus everything in between. From the original species has come a range of single and, more recently, double-flowered hybrids. These can be speckled, blotched, dappled or plain, each flower firmly focused on a central crown of tall, yellow stamens. Appearing in the depths of winter's chill, hellebores are bred to be admired but unfortunately most tend to hide their lovely heads by gazing at the ground.

A search of dedicated mail order nurseries, such as Christchurch's Parva Plants (parvaplants.co.nz) and Clifton Homestead in South Otago (hellebores.co.nz), will yield the best new hybrids in the exact shade you're after.

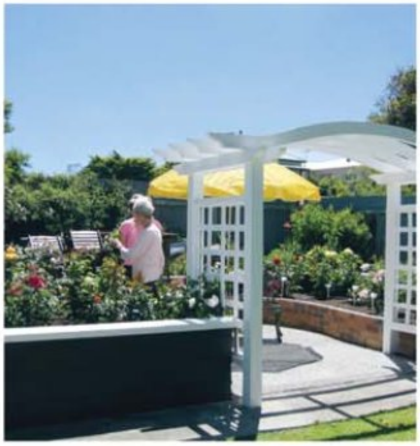
Hellebores are easy to grow and self-seed prolifically, making them a useful ground cover. Keep them well-mulched and when the flowers start shooting up in winter cut back the old leaves so that the blooms stand tall and clear. Fresh leaves will soon grow in support.

Given that it's often freezing outside when hellebores are in their prime, you will want to enjoy their beauty inside. The secret is not to pick them too soon – the seed heads are also attractive and their leathery texture is likely to last longer in water.

Once cut, hellebores vary in their lasting qualities and some forms are difficult. Treat them quickly after cutting. Add florists' preservative to the water or put the tips of the stems in boiling water for about 30 seconds, then plunge them up to their necks in warm water. Alternatively, prick the stems with a needle just below the flowers. If they flag once arranged, repeat the process.

FLOWERS FROM THE NATIONAL FLOWERS PROMOTION GROUP

ABOVE Slim green dishes hold just enough water for the heads of double white hybrids (left) and single hybrids (right). By floating the flowers in this way, you can appreciate their simple form and any decorative markings. The centre dish holds a mature flower head that has developed seeds. Silhouettes from Flotsam & Jetsam, (09) 361 3831; dishes privately owned. **LEFT** A glass cake stand holds a dense cluster of mixed hybrids. Hand-printed napkin from Front Room, (09) 377 2356; glass dish stylist's own.



POOL TO ROSE GARDEN

What to do with your swimming pool when it is no longer required? Dorothy and Ron Rush of Wanganui decided to turn theirs into a rose garden and had begun work when Dorothy was diagnosed with terminal cancer last August. Family and friends swung into action building the pergola, laying bricks and donating and planting roses. Dorothy's vision was carried out to the letter within a week and she took great pleasure in labelling each rose with the name of the person who had given it to her. Sadly, Dorothy died in February and a plaque inscribed with a poem written for her will be the final addition to what is now her memorial garden.

Make the most of magnolia month, the sweet scent of daphne in full bloom and the first hint of spring arriving with tiny miniature daffodils or jonquils such as 'Erlicheer'

Cuttings

Rose Thodey reports on the gardening scene

DIVIDING BULBS

Japanese, Siberian and Louisiana irises can be planted now but leave the bearded varieties until after they have flowered before you divide them. If you feel like splurging on serious fragrance, try growing pink-tinged creamy-flowered tuberoses from Mexico in a container near the house. The bulbs bloom only once so are not for the faint-hearted as you then have to lift them and replant the younger crowns.

OLD RHUBARB?

If your rhubarb plant is five years old or more, dig it up and split the crown with a sharp spade, leaving a leaf or two on each portion before replanting it. Don't forget that the leaves are poisonous – only ever eat the uniquely flavoured tart red stalks.

RIOTOUS RHODOS

Specialist rhododendron and azalea nurseries have plants for sale now. Most of these plants prefer cooler conditions, good drainage and slightly acidic soil. They are surface rooting so, if you think they might drown, raise the plant up and add plenty of mulch – pine needles are excellent. For an extra-special treat, buy a standardised version of your favourite variety. Then sit back and wait for a fabulous display of blooms in October and early November. It's worth a visit to crosshills.co.nz for standard rhododenrons.

FOR DESIGN INSPIRATION...

The theme of this year's NZ Landscape and Garden Design Conference is Designing the Liveable Landscape. A fresh line-up of inspirational speakers from here and overseas promises to open up new realms of gardening and design possibilities. As usual, a tour of Auckland gardens will take place on Friday September 4 before the conference itself, held on September 5 and 6, 2009 at the Waipuna Hotel and Conference Centre, Mt Wellington, Auckland. For the first time one of the speakers, Rosemary Alexander, principal of the London School of Design, will hold a two-day masterclass workshop following the conference. See www.landscapeconference.com or call Jenny Taylor, (09) 812 8506.

PHOTOGRAPHS: RSSFHS / DREAMSTIME.CO (IRIS); KIM GOODING (ROSE GARDEN)

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Tin **tray** with **pots** $114 from Tully & Gardener, (09) 360 7576.

Take time to smell the roses…

If it's blustery outside, you can still have a garden party. Bring it inside with these pretty floral tea things. Striped **tea towel** $25, **plate** $45, **cup and saucer** $58, **spoon** $16 and Selma **teapot** $150, for stockists contact Nelson & Co, (09) 376 0582.

FLORAL DISPLAY

Everything's coming up roses with these Laura Ashley **gardening gloves** $49.50 from Hedgerow, (09) 524 0843.

From old china…

… come the sweetest of decorations. **Butterflies** by Lightly $72 each from Tuberose, (09) 520 5635.

Laura Ashley **gumboots** $145 from Hedgerow, (09) 524 0843.

GARDEN PARTY

If you're working in the garden, why not keep a pretty **flask** to hand? A cup of something you fancy makes light work of hard jobs. Flask $85, for stockists contact Nelson & Co, (09) 376 0582.

"The fragrance always stays in the hand that gives the rose"
– Heda Bejar

5 OF THE BEST

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L'Occitane Rose **hand cream** $49 from L'Occitane, (09) 524 2877.

Les Parfums de Roisine **fragrance** $190 from Mecca Cosmetica, (09) 360 8460.

Terry **Teint de Rose** $175 from Mecca Cosmetica, (04) 472 5899.

Provence Sante Wild Rose **liquid soap** $42.90 from Tuberose, (09) 520 5635.

REN Damask Rose **body cream** $100 from Mecca Cosmetica, (09) 360 8460.

Dandruff, Psoriasis, Scalp Dermatitis...

Is there an effective solution?

(Pulling your hair out doesn't count).

Truth is, even pulling your hair out wouldn't help. Dandruff's not a hair problem. It's a scalp problem that's caused by the over-production of skin cells. Those embarrassing flakes that usually end up on your shoulders are dead skin cells in search of a place to go.

Now comes the tricky part. Flaking or irritation may not even be dandruff. They could also be scalp dermatitis or even mild psoriasis.

All three conditions have similar symptoms. They cause your scalp to flake, itch and generally make life miserable. So ask yourself this: if you don't know which condition you have, what makes you think your shampoo does?

The solution is to use your head.
The smartest approach is to use a shampoo that's proven effective on all three scalp conditions.

Neutrogena T/Gel Therapeutic Shampoo contains Neutar. And Neutar is effective on all three conditions. Neutar was designed to slow down the production of skin cells to a normal rate. You'll see fewer and fewer flakes and have hair that is clean, soft and manageable.

So is there a solution to dandruff, psoriasis, and scalp dermatitis? In a word, yes. Well, actually, its three words, Neutrogena T/Gel Shampoo.

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Rise & shine

Start the day on a bright note with a special breakfast

RECIPES & FOOD STYLING JO WILCOX / **STYLING** CLAUDIA KOZUB / **PHOTOGRAPHS** MELANIE JENKINS

Menu

Egg & Chive Parmesan Brulees

Cranberry & Coconut Bircher Muesli

Peach & Cinnamon Danish Pastries

Fruit Salad with Lime & Vanilla Syrup

Fruity French Toast with Orange & Honey Bananas

Egg and Chive
Parmesan Brulee

Work plan

1-2 days ahead: Make syrup for the fruit salad.
Night before: Prepare oat mixture for muesli. Cook brulees. Bake Danish pastries. Assemble fruit salad.
1-2 hours ahead: Prepare apple and mint for bircher muesli. Whisk egg mixture for French toast.
Close to serving: Arrange muesli in serving bowls. Reheat Danish pastries in oven. Cook bacon and reheat brulees in microwave. Fry French toast and bananas.

Cranberry and Coconut Bircher Muesli

Egg and Chive Parmesan Brulees

Not a true brulee, perhaps, but delicious all the same, this dish is best baked just before serving. However, if you need to be super-organised, the brulees can be made ahead and gently reheated in a microwave while the bacon cooks.

- 4 eggs plus 2 extra yolks
- 1 cup cream
- ⅔ cup milk
- Sea salt to taste
- 2 tablespoons chopped chives
- ½ cup grated parmesan

To serve:

- 8 rashers streaky bacon
- Parmesan shavings and extra chives for garnish

Preheat oven to 180°C. Beat eggs and extra yolks, cream, milk and salt until combined. Strain mixture through a sieve into a jug and stir in chives.

Pour mixture into 4 greased ramekins (about 1-cup capacity). Place ramekins in a roasting dish and fill dish with enough very hot water to come halfway up the sides of the ramekins.

Bake for 15-20 minutes or until egg mixture is puffed and semi-set. Sprinkle parmesan on top and cook for a further 5 minutes or until golden and set.

Remove ramekins from water bath and set aside somewhere warm while cooking bacon.

Swirl bacon rashers into rosettes and place on a lined baking tray. Bake 8-10 minutes until crispy.

Garnish brulees with parmesan and chives and serve with bacon on the side. *Serves 4*

Cranberry and Coconut Bircher Muesli

This nutritious cereal includes oats, fruits and nuts. Begin making it the night before so the oats have time to soak.

- 2 cups rolled oats
- ½ cup dried cranberries
- ½ cup thread coconut
- ½ cup diced dried apple slices
- 2 cups apple juice
- 1 cup Greek yoghurt
- 1 green-skinned apple
- 2-3 tablespoons lemon juice
- 4-5 mint leaves, shredded
- ¼ cup pistachios, chopped

Combine oats, cranberries, coconut and dried apple. Stir in apple juice, cover and chill overnight.

The next morning, fold in yoghurt. Slice apple into thin rings then into fine strips and toss in lemon juice.

Serve muesli topped with apple, mint and a scattering of pistachios. *Serves 4-6 (makes about 5 cups)* >

For a recipe for Spiced Chocolate Coffee see nzhouseandgarden.co.nz

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Fruity French Toast with Orange and Honey Bananas

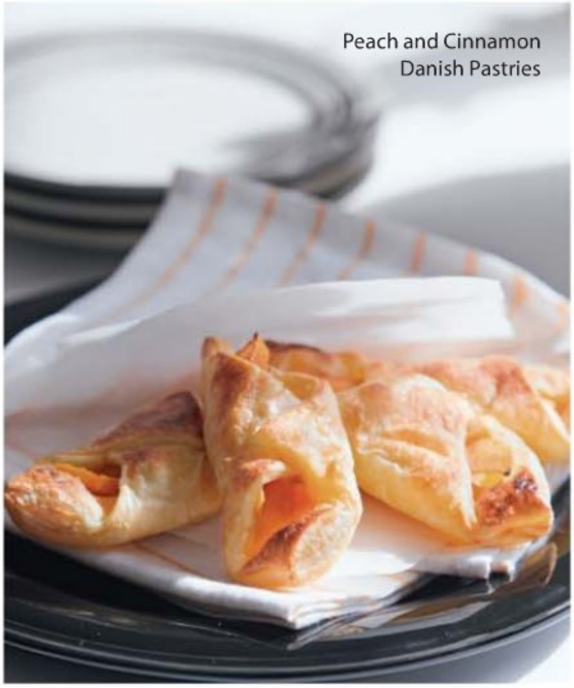
This impressive cafe-style dish needs to be cooked just before serving but it takes just a few minutes if you're organised.

- 2 eggs
- ½ cup milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- Butter for frying
- 4 large slices thick-cut gourmet fruit bread
- 2 firm ripe bananas, halved lengthways
- 1 orange, juice and finely grated zest
- ½ cup liquid honey
- Ricotta or Greek yoghurt to serve

Whisk together eggs, milk and vanilla. Heat a little butter in a heavy pan. Dip bread slices in egg mixture to coat then cook 1-2 minutes each side until golden. Set aside somewhere warm.

Add a little more butter to pan and sear bananas until golden. Add orange juice, zest and honey and heat through until bananas are soft. To serve, cut bread slices in half and stack on warmed plates. Top with ricotta and warm bananas. Drizzle syrup over. *Serves 4* >

Fruit Salad with Lime and Vanilla Syrup



Peach and Cinnamon Danish Pastries

Fruit Salad with Lime and Vanilla Syrup

Limes and kaffir lime leaves give this fruit salad a lovely fresh flavour. To prepare the lime leaves, fold them in half lengthways and cut off and discard the central rib, then cut the remaining leaf as finely as possible.

- 1 cup water
- ½ cup sugar
- 1 vanilla bean, split lengthways
- 2 limes, juice and finely grated zest
- 2-3 kaffir lime leaves, cut very finely
- 4 gold kiwifruit
- 2 pears
- ½ rock melon

Place water, sugar and vanilla in a small pan and simmer 5 minutes or until a light syrup. Take off heat, remove vanilla bean and scrape seeds back into syrup. Cool then add lime juice, zest and lime leaves.

Peel and slice kiwifruit, pears and melon and gently toss with syrup in a large bowl. To serve, spoon fruit into serving glasses and pour over any remaining syrup from bowl. *Serves 4-6*

Peach and Cinnamon Danish Pastries

This is a very quick, very easy "cheat's" version of the Scandinavian speciality. The pastries can be assembled a few hours ahead and kept in the fridge until ready to cook, or baked ahead then reheated the next day in a hot oven.

- 2 sheets butter puff pastry
- 1 egg
- 2 tablespoons milk
- 410g can peach slices, drained (or use fresh peaches in season)
- About ¼ cup cinnamon sugar*

Preheat oven to 190°C fan bake. Cut each pastry sheet into 6 even squares (to do this it will be necessary to trim and discard a little off one side of each sheet).

Whisk egg and milk together to make an egg wash. Brush squares with egg wash and place 2-3 peach slices across each square diagonally. Sprinkle with cinnamon sugar. Fold 2 diagonal corners of each pastry square across the peaches so they overlap and seal with a little egg wash. Brush tops with more egg wash and sprinkle with more sugar.

Place pastries on a lined tray and bake 8-10 minutes until golden and puffed. Transfer to a wire rack to cool slightly before serving. *Makes 12*

*Cinnamon sugar is available from supermarkets or you can make your own by combining ¼ cup caster sugar with ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon.

Wire bench seats from Forma, (09) 368 7694; striped crockery and large black plates from May Time, (09) 526 4274; salt and pepper pots, yellow flower mugs, tea towels, toaster and jug from Milly's, (09) 309 1690; cutlery, glasses, vase, grey throw, curtain, place mats, glass jug, cube seats and black and white tea towels from Freedom, 0800 373 336; other items stylist's own.

27/05/09
Roasted Pumpkin and Spinach Risotto
made by
Nicole Fowler
Roasted Pumpkin and Spinach Risotto
Prep Time: 15 minutes
Cooking Time: 40 minutes
Serves: 4
1.2kg pumpkin, peeled, cut into 2cm pieces
2 tbsp oil
1 x 1 Litre pack Campbell's Real Stock – Vegetable
1 onion, diced
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1½ cups arborio rice
1½ cups baby spinach leaves
¼ cup grated parmesan
¼ cup pine nuts, toasted
extra grated parmesan, to serve
I preheated my oven to 200°C then placed the diced pumpkin into a large roasting dish, tossed in a tbsp of oil and baked for 20 mins until tender. Meanwhile, I brought the stock to the boil in a saucepan, then reduced the heat to keep it warm. I heated the remaining oil in another saucepan, before adding the onion & garlic. After cooking for 5 mins, I mixed in the rice, added a cup of stock and stirred constantly until the stock was absorbed. The trick was to add the stock 1 cup at a time, stirring until it was all soaked in. Once the rice was nice and tender, I stirred in the spinach, parmesan, pine nuts & roasted pumpkin. A sprinkle of parmesan at serving time made a world of difference too. My stock secret – If there's any left over stock I pour it into an ice-cube tray & freeze – good for up to 3 months.
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Y&R ARN 0139_1

Take the cake

Seven fabulous cakes from our "best-loved" files

Peach and Polenta
Upside-down Cake

Chocolate Cherry Cakes

"A gourmet who thinks of calories is like a tart who looks at her watch"

JAMES BEARD

Chocolate Cherry Cakes

These scrumptious little cherry-studded chocolate cakes are baked in Texas muffin pans. They will keep in the fridge for up to a week (if you can resist them). Bring them back to room temperature before serving.

1 egg
¾ cup sugar
¼ cup neutral oil, eg rice bran
½ cup buttermilk
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
½ orange, finely grated zest
1 cup flour
¼ cup cocoa
1 teaspoon baking soda
½ teaspoon baking powder
120g preserved pitted cherries, drained (save the syrup)
¼ cup reserved cherry syrup
¼ cup cold strong black coffee
Ganache:
200g good-quality dark chocolate
½ cup cream
2 tablespoons butter
1 tablespoon reserved cherry syrup

Preheat oven to 180°C. Grease and line 6 Texas (large) muffin pans.

Beat egg, add sugar and beat until well mixed. Add oil and beat well. Add buttermilk, vanilla and zest and beat until combined.

Sift over flour, cocoa, baking soda and baking powder and mix until well combined. Add cherries, cherry syrup and coffee and mix well (mixture will be very runny).

Spoon mixture into prepared pans. Bake 20-25 minutes. Cakes are cooked if they spring back when lightly touched with a finger. Allow to cool in tins before removing to a rack.

Ganache: Place all ingredients in a small saucepan and melt over low heat, stirring until smooth. Cool until just thickened. Place a piece of baking paper under rack and spread icing over cakes. If necessary, refrigerate for a short time to set icing. Store covered in the fridge. *Makes 6*

Peach and Polenta Upside-down Cake

(pictured page 139)

Janet Dunn, who created this recipe, reckons it was one of her best. A dollop of creme fraiche is delicious on the side.

Glaze:
50g butter, softened
80g brown sugar
2 tablespoons golden syrup
Cake:
410g can peach slices, drained (or use fresh peaches in season)
125g butter
175g sugar
2 eggs
1½ cups flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon ground cardamom
2 tablespoons polenta
½ cup (125g) sour cream

Preheat oven to 180°C. Grease and line a 21cm round cake tin.

Beat glaze ingredients until creamy and spread over base of prepared tin. Arrange peach slices on top.

Cream butter and sugar then beat in eggs one at a time. Sift flour with baking powder and cardamom and mix with polenta. Fold into creamed mixture with sour cream (mixture will be quite stiff). Spread over peaches. Bake 50-60 minutes until springy. Cool 10 minutes before turning out of tin.

Best Light Fruitcake

This wonderful sultana and cherry cake is a long-time family favourite of food writer Bernadette Hogg, who shared the recipe with us.

- 300g sultanas
- 150g glace cherries, halved, plus extra for garnish
- 225g butter
- 1½ cups sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ¼ teaspoon almond essence
- ¼ teaspoon lemon essence
- 3 eggs
- 2½ cups flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder

Preheat oven to 150°C. Line the base and sides of a 22cm loose-bottom cake tin. Cover sultanas with cold water and boil 5 minutes. Drain and cool then mix in the cherries.

Cream butter and sugar. Add vanilla, almond and lemon essences then eggs one at a time, beating after each addition. Sift over flour and baking powder and gently fold in. Add sultanas and cherries and mix until evenly distributed.

Spoon mixture into prepared tin and bake 1½-2 hours or until a skewer inserted into the centre of the cake comes out clean.

Leave cake in tin until completely cooled. It will keep in an airtight container for up to a week. >

Amaretti Chocolate Cake

Banana Crumble Cake

Ginger Cake with Ginger Cream Cheese Frosting

Ginger Cake with Ginger Cream Cheese Frosting

This is best baked a day or two ahead so the texture has time to settle. Add the decadent frosting on the day of serving.

- 250g butter
- 1 cup brown sugar, lightly packed
- 1 cup golden syrup
- 2 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 2 teaspoons baking soda dissolved in 1 tablespoon warm water
- 3 cups flour
- 1 teaspoon each: ground ginger, cinnamon and nutmeg
- 70g crystallised ginger, coarsely chopped, plus extra for decorating

Frosting:

- 100g cream cheese
- 50g butter
- 1½ cups icing sugar, sifted
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 lime or lemon, juice and zest

Preheat oven to 180°C. Grease and line a 23cm square cake tin.

Melt butter with sugar and golden syrup and leave to cool.

Combine eggs and buttermilk in a bowl and add dissolved baking soda. Pour egg mixture into cooled golden syrup mixture. Sift flour and spices together in a large bowl. Make a well in the centre and pour in the wet mixture. Add crystallised ginger and mix well.

Pour into tin and bake 45-50 minutes or until a skewer inserted in the centre comes out clean. Stand for 10 minutes before turning out on to a wire rack to cool. Cover with frosting and decorate with crystallised ginger.

Frosting: Beat cream cheese and butter until smooth. Gradually add icing sugar, ginger and zest and enough juice to create a smooth icing.

Amaretti Chocolate Cake

A coating of crunchy Italian amaretti biscuits and Amaretto liqueur in the icing give this stunning layered confection a delectable hint of almond to complement the chocolate-orange flavour of the cake.

125g dark chocolate
1 cup boiling water
1 teaspoon baking soda
250g unsalted butter
1½ cups caster sugar
4 large eggs, separated
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 orange, finely grated zest
2½ cups flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
⅔ cup sour cream (not low-fat)
Icing:
200g butter, softened
2 cups icing sugar
1 cup cocoa
2 tablespoons milk, heated
2 tablespoons Amaretto
150g amaretti biscuits, crushed

Line two 20cm round cake tins with baking paper.

Break chocolate into pieces and place in a small bowl. Pour over boiling water and stir until smooth. Add baking soda. Leave to cool.

Preheat oven to 180°C. Cream butter and sugar. Gradually beat in egg yolks. Add vanilla, zest and cooled chocolate.

Sift flour and baking powder together. Fold into chocolate mixture alternately with sour cream. Beat egg whites until stiff and fold gently through mixture.

Pour mixture into tins and bake 45-50 minutes or until cakes are cooked when tested with a skewer. Cool slightly before removing from tins. Cool completely on wire racks before assembling and icing.

Icing: Place butter, icing sugar and cocoa in a food processor and mix for a few seconds. Add hot milk and Amaretto and process until combined.

To assemble: Cut each cake into 2 layers. Place 1 layer on a serving plate and spread with 2 heaped tablespoons icing. Top with another layer of cake. Repeat until all layers are sandwiched together. Cover cake completely with remaining icing and press crushed amaretti biscuits against the sides and top. Refrigerate at least 30 minutes before serving.

Banana Crumble Cake

An oat and coconut crumble topping adds extra taste and texture appeal to this old favourite, which is quickly mixed in a food processor.

125g butter
¾ cup caster sugar
2 eggs
2 very ripe bananas, chopped
¼ cup milk, heated to tepid
1 teaspoon baking soda
1¼ cups self-raising flour
Crumble topping:
80g brown sugar
40g butter
½ cup thread coconut
¼ cup rolled oats
4 tablespoons milk

Preheat oven to 170°C. Grease and line the base of a 22cm ring tin.

Place butter and sugar in a food processor and mix until creamy and pale. Add eggs one at a time, processing well after each one. Scrape down bowl and mix in bananas.

Mix milk with soda and add to processor with flour and pulse until just combined.

Spoon mixture into tin and bake 30 minutes. Meanwhile, place all crumble topping ingredients in a small saucepan and bring to the boil, stirring well.

Spoon topping over cake and bake a further 10 minutes or until golden and crisp and a skewer inserted in the centre comes out cleanly.

Honey Orange Cupcakes

Honey Orange Cupcakes

These light-as-air cakes melt in the mouth.

3 eggs, separated
½ cup caster sugar
1 orange, finely grated zest
¾ cup self-raising flour
2 tablespoons cornflour
¼ cup milk
1 tablespoon honey
1 tablespoon (15g) soft butter
To serve:
Mascarpone
16 orange segments (about 2 oranges)
Icing sugar for dusting

Preheat oven to 180°C. Place 16 paper cases in medium muffin tins.

Beat egg whites to soft peaks then gradually beat in sugar until mixture is stiff. Stir yolks and zest together and fold in. Sift flour with cornflour and fold in lightly. Heat milk and stir in honey and butter until melted. Drizzle over egg mixture and fold in.

Spoon batter into paper cases and bake 15-18 minutes or until cakes are golden and springy to the touch. Transfer to a wire rack to cool.

When ready to serve, use a sharp serrated knife to remove a small wedge from each cake. Fill with mascarpone and top with an orange segment. Sift icing sugar over. *Makes 16*

Give into Gold

Enjoy the richness and depth of high-quality 100% Arabica coffee beans in your kitchen with the new **NESCAFÉ Gold** range

Coffee, Raisin & Marsala Cheesecake

- 3 tablespoons **NESCAFÉ Gold** Rich Roast
- 3 tablespoons boiling water
- ½ cup lightly packed icing sugar
- 2 cups flour
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 160g cold butter, cut in 5cm cubes
- 1 cup raisins
- ½ cup Marsala wine (or other sweet wine or sherry)
- 125g caster sugar
- 400g cream cheese, softened
- 150ml sour cream
- 2 large eggs

Dissolve 1 tablespoon of the **NESCAFÉ Gold** in the boiling water. Place in the freezer until very cold, about 15 minutes.

In a food processor pulse icing sugar, flour and salt to combine. Add the cold butter and pulse until barely combined. Mix in the cold coffee mixture and pulse until the mixture is evenly combined, but not coming together in a ball.

Tip onto a lightly floured surface and gently knead together until smooth. Roll to a 30cm circle. Line a lightly greased and floured 23cm loose-bottom, high-sided flan tin and press firmly to cover the base and sides. Cut off excess pastry. Chill.

Preheat the oven to 160°C. Heat the raisins and Marsala in a saucepan over a medium heat until just starting to boil. Add the caster sugar and remaining 2 tablespoons of **NESCAFÉ Gold** and stir until dissolved.

In a large bowl beat together the cream cheese, sour cream and eggs then stir in the coffee mixture. Pour into the prepared base and smooth the top. Bake for 1 hour until firm around the edges but soft in the middle. Cool then chill. Serve decorated with more soaked raisins if desired. *Serves 10*

Each roast is made from 100% Arabica beans, so you're sure to get a quality coffee experience no matter which one you choose.

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- **NEW Rich Roast** – medium roast crafted to produce a balance between richness and depth, with a smooth aftertaste.
- **NEW Dark Roast** – robustly roasted to produce a confident cup with intense aroma and bold flavour.

NESCAFÉ® GOLD

Spiced Coffee Custard Caramels

For the caramel:
¼ cup water
1 cup sugar

For the custard:
6 green cardamom pods
1 cinnamon stick
4 whole cloves
2 tablespoons **NESCAFÉ Gold** Original
1 cup whole milk
1 cup cream
3 eggs
2 egg yolks
½ cup sugar

Preheat the oven to 160°C. Place 6 individual heatproof ramekins or moulds in a deep baking dish and place in the oven to warm as the oven does.

To make the caramel, put the water and sugar in a saucepan over a low heat and stir gently until dissolved. When dissolved, do not stir again. Bring to the boil and boil for about 10 minutes until golden. Pour into the warmed ramekins. Set aside.

Crush the cardamom and cinnamon and place in a saucepan with the cloves, **NESCAFÉ Gold**, milk and cream. Heat until just before boiling.

Beat the eggs, egg yolks and sugar together in a bowl until pale yellow. Beat in the warm milk mixture. Strain into a jug, making sure any froth has subsided, then pour into the prepared ramekins.

Fill the baking dish with hot water to halfway up the ramekins. Bake for 45-50 minutes until a knife comes out clean from the custard. Cool and chill at least 4 hours or overnight.

Run a knife around the edge of each custard and turn out onto serving dishes. *Serves 6*

Coffee & Almond Kisses

150g butter
¾ cup caster sugar
1 small egg
1 cup flour, sifted
½ cup ground almonds
½ cup sliced almonds

For the coffee buttercream:
2 tablespoons **NESCAFÉ Gold** Dark Roast
1 tablespoon boiling water
100g butter, softened
2 cups icing sugar

To dust:
1 tablespoon **NESCAFÉ Gold** Dark Roast
2 tablespoons icing sugar

Preheat the oven to 180°C. Beat together the butter and caster sugar until light and creamy. Beat in the egg. Add the flour, ground almonds and sliced almonds and stir gently until well combined.

Place walnut-sized balls of the mixture on a lined baking tray and flatten slightly. Bake for 18 minutes until golden. Cool on a wire rack.

For the buttercream, stir together the **NESCAFÉ Gold** and boiling water in a small bowl to dissolve. Set aside.

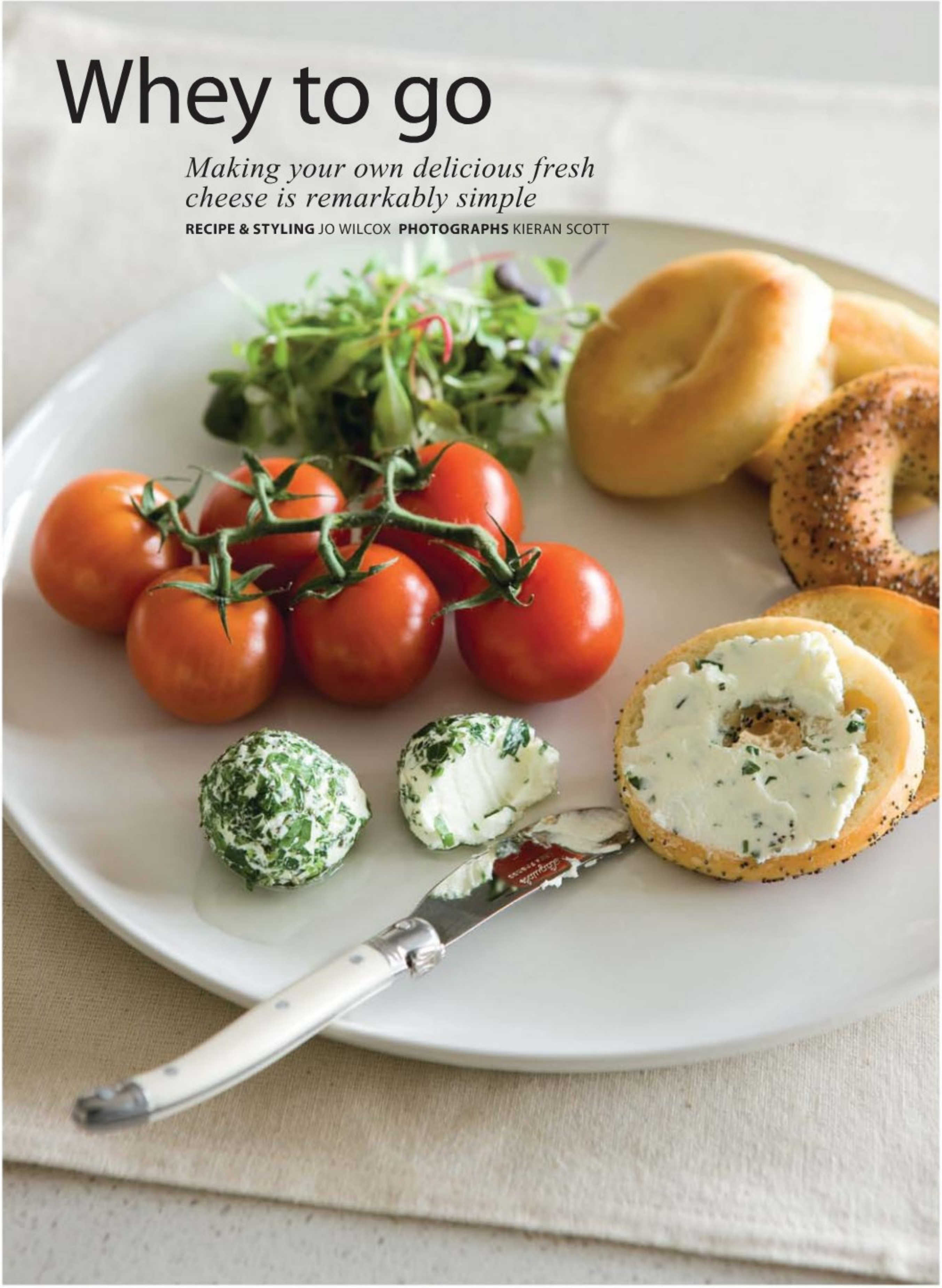
Beat together the butter and icing sugar then add the dissolved coffee. Sandwich together the cooled biscuits with the coffee buttercream.

To dust, crush the **NESCAFÉ Gold** to a fine powder with the back of a spoon and combine with the icing sugar. Sift over the biscuits. *Makes 12 double biscuits*

Whey to go

Making your own delicious fresh cheese is remarkably simple

RECIPE & STYLING JO WILCOX **PHOTOGRAPHS** KIERAN SCOTT



KITCHENWARE FROM NEST, NEWMARKET

Labneh (Yoghurt Cheese)

1kg Greek-style yoghurt
1 clove garlic, crushed
1½ teaspoons sea salt
Muslin (at least 50cm square)
About 1 cup finely chopped fresh herbs (eg parsley, rosemary, mint, sage)
2-3 strips lemon peel (removed with a vege peeler, no pith)
About 500ml light olive oil

1 Combine yoghurt, garlic and salt, mixing well. Line a colander or sieve with muslin and spoon in mixture.

2 Bring the 4 corners of the muslin together and tie to create a ball of yoghurt. Suspend the yoghurt over a container to catch the whey and place in the fridge for 24-48 hours.

3 Take walnut-sized pieces of the soft white cheese and gently roll them into balls in the palms of your hands then roll balls in chopped herbs to coat.

4 Place cheese balls and lemon peel in a clean jar and pour oil over to cover completely. Labneh will keep in a sealed jar in the fridge for up to 2 weeks. Take from fridge a little while before serving to allow oil to liquefy. *Makes 25-30*

Cook's notes

- Labneh is a delicious Middle Eastern fresh cheese made from strained yoghurt. It can be served as a dip or rolled into balls to make labneh makbus. These creamy little balls are wonderful on antipasto platters, in sandwiches and salads and as an impressive home-made gift.
- If serving labneh as a dip, tip the cheese into a serving dish, drizzle around some olive oil and scatter with za'atar (a Middle Eastern spice blend) or chopped herbs. Accompany with raw vegetables (eg carrot, celery, radish, cucumber), olives and pita wedges.
- Muslin, aka cheesecloth, is available from craft and fabric shops. It can be bought inexpensively by the metre but don't confuse it with baby muslin, which has a finer weave.
- If you wish to sterilise the muslin before use, immerse it in boiling water for a minute then carefully transfer it to the colander or sieve using tongs.
- In order to suspend the yoghurt-filled muslin ball you will need a deep container and a rod to sit across the top – an ice bucket or large vase and a wooden spoon do the job perfectly.
- Some traditional recipes suggest draining the cheese at room temperature but it is best not to take a chance with bacterial contamination, even if it means rearranging your fridge for a day or two.
- The thicker and richer the yoghurt, the creamier the finished cheese. How long you strain it also makes a difference – overnight may be fine or it may need up to 48 hours to get to a consistency that can be rolled into balls (expect this to be a slightly messy task). Yoghurts containing thickeners such as gelatin can give a firmer result.
- If necessary, the rolled balls can be chilled uncovered on a plate for a few hours or more to dry them out a little before placing them in the oil.
- For extra flavour, add smoked or plain paprika to the chopped herbs that the balls are rolled in.
- Use the fragrant leftover oil for cooking and to flavour savoury dishes. The whey can be used as part or all of the liquid when making bread, soup, pancakes or muffins. It keeps at least a week in the fridge or can be frozen.

Golden oldies

A band of local superannuitants leads the picking at this seaside vineyard

WORDS YVONNE MARIE LORKIN / **PHOTOGRAPHS** STUDIO CAFÉ NOIR

"At the end of the day, after a cuppa, we all just wander home. I love working out here in the open air and being with all the girls"

On the first sunny day after a spell of rain, Clearview Estate owner and winemaker Tim Turvey realises the time is nigh to pick his sauvignon blanc. The grapes are at their best but the weather could turn again. The fruit must be picked immediately. So who does he call?

The Golden Girls. Phones around the Hawke's Bay seaside settlement of Te Awanga ring hot as this crack team of pickers gathers hats, gumboots, sunscreen and secateurs and heads over to Tim's vineyard, fast.

Well, as fast as 12 ladies who would look more at home at a Grey Power meeting than in a vineyard can go. But what they may lack in speed they make up for in reliability. "They're just amazing; absolute treasures," says Tim.

It's the promise of jokes, gossip and laughter that keeps them coming back year after year. Pat Wilkin, in her late 60s, is one of the founding "girls". Tim and Pat's husband Lionel helped plant this vineyard in 1994 and Tim believes that, at 120 metres from the waves, it's the closest vineyard to the sea in the world.

Working next to Pat is Gail Baker, a Golden Girl for just over eight years. "Being outdoors in this beautiful place is just the best thing," she says.

Robin Gardiner agrees. "We all live just down the road, which is why we can come down here to pick grapes at the drop of a hat. Then at the end of the day, after a cuppa, we all just wander home. I love working out here in the open air and being with all the girls."

Camaraderie is crucial, with many of the women socialising beyond the vines.

"There's housie night down in the village, spinning and weaving groups and we run an exercise group in the Te Awanga hall that most of the girls go to," says Gail. "By now we know each other warts and all," adds Joy Hurren, "so we are like a family."

Pauline Conroy has been a part of the picking posse for close to 10 years. "It all started when a group of us began picking for Lionel and Pat. Then Tim began borrowing us and it's gone downhill from there. We used to be known as Lionel's harem," says Pauline, laughing.

Yet it's the opposite sex who cop the teasing out here and the girls make it clear that any man brave enough to pick

THIS PAGE (clockwise from top left) Anne Mann holds sauvignon blanc grapes. Pat Wilkin and Anne Mann. Joy Hurren enjoying a cuppa. Joy and Lionel Wilkin hard at work.
OPPOSITE Experienced hands tend the fruit. Gail Baker (front left), Pauline Conroy (front right) and Jeremy Dunningham (back left) head to smoko with the rest of the workers.

with them (and there are a few) must have a thick skin, a sense of humour "and good-looking legs".

It seems anything goes when it comes to conversation fodder in the vines – including a few ribald stories. But, if he's asked whether there's ever been any scandal or drama, you'll only hear Tim yell, "What goes on in the vineyard stays on the vineyard, okay?"

So are there any downsides to this job? "No," says Pat, "except maybe a bit of backache and the odd cut finger."

"When we started we wanted to make a new wine each year," says Tim, "and, after 23 years, we've got 23 wines. In 2010 our new wine will be a sauvignon gris."

"It's such a lovely thing to know that there's a little piece of you in each bottle and every harvest has its own stories," says Pauline, as the girls head over to the winery for morning tea.

Joy tells a tale about being caught in torrential rain. The girls tried their best to sprint to the safety of the smoko room, "But the faster we ran, the funnier it got," she says with a laugh. "You can imagine how we looked – a bunch of old girls wobbling along. We ended up taking off our wet clothes and went home in our bras!"

This year Clearview bottled their gewurztraminer a mere 76 days after it was picked, making it the first Hawke's Bay wine from the 2009 vintage to be released. Thanks to the cracking pace set by his loyal band of Golden Girls, Tim knows just who to thank. ■

Black and White Brownies

No Golden Girls' smoko would be complete without Clearview's famous brownies (recipe courtesy of chef Kerry McKay). The cream cheese topping makes it moist and cheesecake-ish.

- 200g unsalted butter
- 2 cups sugar
- 5 large eggs
- 200g bittersweet chocolate, melted
- 200g flour
- 1 tablespoon cocoa powder
- Pinch of salt
- 500g cream cheese
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 170°C. Grease and line a 23cm-square baking pan.

Beat butter and 1¼ cups of the sugar until light and fluffy. Add 3 of the eggs and beat well. Fold in melted chocolate then sifted flour, cocoa and salt. Spread batter over base of prepared pan, reserving about ¾ cup for later use.

Beat together cream cheese and remaining ¾ cup sugar. Add vanilla and remaining 2 eggs and beat until smooth.

Spread mixture evenly over chocolate batter and scatter spoonfuls of reserved chocolate batter on top. Using a knife or spoon, swirl the chocolate dollops to create a marbled effect.

Bake 45-50 minutes or until a skewer comes out with a moist crumb. Cool before cutting. *Makes 20 pieces*

Small bites

Entertaining editor Sally Butters selects good things to eat, try and buy

In season: navel oranges

They don't always look as perfectly formed as some imported citrus but it's hard to beat the burst of tangy flavour from fresh, juicy, locally grown navel oranges. Navels are easy to recognise by their navel-like end, which contains a baby orange. Most of New Zealand's crop comes from the Gisborne area.

Chocolate vincotto is a flavour sensation on ice cream, panna cotta and red meats. $48 for 375ml at Sabato, 0800 722 286.

Nielson-Massey **extracts** contain natural flavours, unlike lab-made essences. From $10 at Truffle, (04) 385 2802.

Dutch cinnamon, aka cassia, is sweeter and stronger than regular cinnamon, making it a favourite for pies, puds and baking. $6 for 50g, (04) 569 5248 for stores.

The Squeeze It! by Tupperware is not your average **piping tool**. This plastic fantastic has a concertina body, comes with five nozzles and is dishwasher-safe. $30, 0800 800 818.

Complex flavours and rare, prized beans make Amedei the Lamborghini of **chocolate**. From $22.50 per 50g at Truffle, (04) 385 2802.

Chestnut Cream is a delectable fat-free **spread** from France. $6.90 per 370g from C'est Fromage, (09) 529 0157.

These single-flower **organic honeys** are sourced from bee-keepers around the country. From $10 per 160g, nzartisanhoney.co.nz.

For successful crepe-making, it's hard to beat a De Buyer blue steel **crepe pan**. $25 for an 18cm pan. Imported from France by Milly's, (09) 309 1690.

ALL PRICES ARE APPROXIMATE. PHOTOGRAPHS: PHOTOLIBRARY; JASON BERGE/SHOOT STUDIO

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GET SMART

The future of home technology

STORY SHELLEY BRIDGEMAN/ **PHOTOGRAPHS** JACKIE MEIRING

THIS PAGE BeoCentre 2 **DVD/CD/radio player** $8350 from Bang & Olufsen; Dots candleholders $73 for a set of six from BoConcept.
OPPOSITE MacPro **computer** from $5599 from MagnumMac; BeoCom 2 cordless **phone** $1825 from Bang & Olufsen; chair and desk privately owned; silver **files** $8.90 each from Smiggle; white **magazine holders** $18.70 each from Kikki.K; Vivi **vase** $32.95 from Nest; Pal **radio** $399 from Askew; white **photo frame** $25.60 by Citta from BoConcept; Bestlite **table lamp** designed by Robert Dudley Best POA from Corporate Culture; tape **dispenser** $37.40 from Kikki.K; Waves **tealight holder** (used as a pen holder) $28 from BoConcept; **pens, pencils** and **rubbish bin** $99, all from Kikki.K; model is wearing: Mesop purple **dress** $129 and Ambassador **vest** $429, both from October Reign.

LEFT Tangent **radio** in walnut $349 from Eastern HiFi; **MacBook Pro** 15-inch 2.4GHz $3699 from MagnumMac; designer **day bed** $3995 from Bauhaus; silver **cushion** $60 from Forma; Vixen ikat **rug** by Georgia Chapman POA from Designer Rugs; model is wearing: V+Woods Mia **dress** in zodiac blue $329 from October Reign; Nutmeg the dog.

There was a time when our audio, visual, computing and communications needs at home could be met simply by purchasing a stereo, television, computer and telephone and plugging them in. But those days are gone. Home technology today, and into the foreseeable future, is more about creating an all-encompassing, integrated system than acquiring discrete items of hardware that operate in isolation from each other. Cutting-edge systems ensure that all your technology is compatible and available at multiple locations throughout the house.

Automation Associates is a company based in Auckland that specialises in guiding people through what can be a high-tech minefield. "The term 'smart wiring' is often thrown around quite loosely," says sales manager Dwayne Cocker. "But, basically, it refers to the cabling installed in your new home to allow the distribution of television, telephone and data when and where it's required." In short, it means that television, telephones and the internet can be accessed from any room. It can also deliver high-definition video content wherever it's required in the home.

Smart wiring future-proofs your home in two ways. First, it ensures you're able to take advantage of emerging technology. Second, it means you can easily convert a bedroom into an office. Ultimately, it offers flexibility and the opportunity for your home to evolve in tune with your needs.

Dwayne estimates that installing this sort of cabling into a new, four-bedroom, 300 to 350sqm house with two living areas and a double garage could cost between $4000 and $10,000. Just as security systems are now routinely installed in new houses, smart wiring is increasingly being factored into the budget for newly built homes. Retro-fitting this feature into existing homes is difficult and costly and best done only if the interior is going to be gutted and rebuilt.

The hub of a home's entertainment system may be a media centre PC on which the family's favourite material is stored. A product called Kitchen OneTouch, offered by Integrated Lifestyle Innovations, is essentially a media centre control screen built in to your wall or benchtop, which allows access to music, photos, television, video and internet. It can be upgraded to control a CCTV camera, multi-room sound and home automation.

A touch screen embedded within a wireless remote control is another way to operate a smart home's functions. This device will easily set up the entertainment system for, say, DVD watching. At the touch of a single button, the television, amplifier and DVD player switch on and configure themselves accordingly. All the human in the equation must do is insert the disc and push play.

Perhaps the ultimate in high-tech user-friendliness is a system offered by Control4 that allows your home systems to be controlled by existing handheld mobile devices such as iPhones. This company also offers cost-effective retro-fitting of the latest automation features to existing homes, using a combination of wired and wireless technology. >

RIGHT BeoVision 8 40-inch LCD **television** $9575, BeoCom 2 cordless **phone** $1825 and BeoLab 8000 **speaker** $8000 for a pair, all from Bang & Olufsen; Ombre **vase** in turquoise $219, Astrid deco **vase** $89.95 and white glass **vase** $74.95, all from Nest; artwork and book privately owned; on the floor: navy **throw** $439 from Republic; navy and silver **cushion** $20 from Forma; model is wearing: purple **pashmina** $99 from October Reign; Sailor **top** $97, Marine grey **skirt** $127 and Mini-metallicus **tights** $39, all from Child. **BELOW** Canon G10 14.7 megapixel optical zoom **camera** $899.95 from MagnumMac; **cards** $6.90 from Republic.

Whether it's a new or existing house, Control4's single interface unit allows you to operate smart functions including home theatre, multi-room music, lighting, heating and security.

The Kitchen OneTouch from Integrated Lifestyle Innovations can give you access to music, photos, television, video and the internet via a single intuitive touch screen.

The Meridian G92 integrated DVD system is designed to be the centrepiece of an HD home theatre. It plays DVDs and CDs and has an AM/FM tuner. $13,000 through Totally Wired or Soundline.

Silver fourth-generation **iPod Nano** 8GB $249 and Sennheiser PX100 **headphones** $100, both from MagnumMac; marble-topped **side table** $580 from Forma; on the table: Nova **vase** $79.95 from Nest; Pantone **mug** $23.50 from Askew; plate with brownies stylist's own; Egg **chair** designed by Arne Jacobsen POA from Corporate Culture; taupe and lurex **throw** $110 from Republic; model is wearing: merino **hoodie** $125 and Ultramarine footless **leggings** $51, both from Child.

Bang & Olufsen has released a state-of-the-art 103-inch plasma BeoVision television that's designed to function as the "cornerstone of an intelligent home". It comes with a motorised floor stand and the screen elevates at the push of a button then turns and tilts for optimal viewing; the central loud speaker also emerges. Significantly, this television, with its programmable remote control, can be used as a hub for linking audio and video applications with other automated home systems.

Customised audiovisual (AV) systems can be designed, wired and fitted by home-automation specialist Strawberry Sound, which has four outlets in the South Island. Enhance Technology, an Upper Hutt company, also creates bespoke home theatres, multi-room audio and mood lighting systems.

Functions such as lighting, heating, ventilation, security, alarms, pool covers, curtains and blinds can all be programmed to activate at set times – or in response to changing conditions. As examples, Automation Associates' Dwayne Cocker cites the tread lights in a flight of stairs being motion-activated after sunset and heating that comes on once the external temperature drops below a certain point. He adds that, though "high-net-worth individuals" may have almost every gadget in their house centrally automated, many people simply automate lights and AV equipment. Hardware recommendations are typically tailored to budget; projectors, for example, range in price from $3000 to $30,000.

The Bose Wave music system is a CD player and AM/FM tuner that delivers convincing sound from a compact tabletop unit operated by a slimline infrared remote control. $1099

Sony's NWZB135FB MP3 Walkman has a drag-and-drop function and direct USB connectivity for easy transfer of songs from your computer. $139.95

The high-performance Radius R90 bookshelf or on-wall speakers can be used for a compact stereo system or as rear speakers in a home theatre. $700 a pair through Totally Wired or Soundline.

Finally, there's even an automated function designed for the technology enthusiast who is also environmentally aware. An "away button" near the front door will shut off every application in the house – including AV gear, fans, mirror pads, heating, lighting and music – thus preventing power wastage. Now, that's smart!

HOME VIEWING

Dedicated home theatres have become something of a staple in today's upmarket houses. Often located in a basement area and equipped with rows of movie-style seating, many of them can accommodate more than a dozen viewers.

However, as this trend matures, we are expecting the media rooms of the future to downsize and become more modestly proportioned. They are also likely to be more inviting, with comfortable sofas, cushions, ottomans and beanbags replacing more industrial-style furniture as we strive to make these rooms look and feel as homely as the rest of the house.

Meanwhile, the eternal quest for better and more lifelike images continues in the world of on-screen pictures. High definition is the industry catch cry and Sony offers a suite of products in response to this demand. The latest Bravia high-definition LCD televisions have a built-in HD tuner for effortless access to high-definition services such as Freeview and MySky. High-definition cameras, camcorders and a VAIO notebook computer with Blu-ray disc drive extend the range.

Blu-ray is a new generation of disc that has superseded the trusty DVD. Although a Blu-ray disc looks the same as its predecessor, it offers superior picture quality. Widely considered to be the ultimate format high-definition disc, its on-screen picture is expressed in 1080 horizontal lines compared to about 570 on a DVD. A Blu-ray player (which is also capable of playing DVDs) is required to play Blu-ray discs. >

RIGHT KEF iPod docking **sound system** $1500 from Eastern HiFi; second-generation **iPod Touch** 8GB $389 from MagnumMac; white **binders** $24.90 each from Kikki.K; Pantone **notebook** $9 and *Wallpaper* **guides** $16 each, all from Askew; Reflect **toothbrush holder** (used as a pen holder) $23.95 from Nest; gel **pens** $5.90 each, white **scissors** $8.70 and giant **pencil** (foreground) $5.60, all from Kikki.K.

Capture high-definition video on the move with Sony's HDR-TG1E pocket-sized Handycam with 4GB memory stick. $1699.95

Share your personal music with friends and family with the Bose SoundDock – a portable iPod speaker system. $649

Panasonic's SDR-S26GN-A movie camera is a compact camcorder with 70x optical zoom that even corrects the effects of the operator's shaky hands. $699.99

Tivoli's iYiYi (pronounced eye-eye-eye) is a radio and iPod dock in one unit. This high-fidelity iPod speaker system is billed as "the iPod player for radio lovers". $699

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Approximately 50% of the heat lost from a well-insulated home with single glazing goes out through single glazed windows. With Dualglaze double glazing, a layer of air is trapped between the two panes of glass creating an insulator to prevent heat from escaping. Installing Dualglaze double glazing units will not only make a difference to your heating bills but will make your home more comfortable for you and your family.

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This Sony 8-inch notebook computer, the VGNP15GR from the VAIO P series, weighs just 599 grams. It can be easily gripped in one hand and offers wireless network functionality. $2299.95

HOME GAMING

The future of home entertainment arrived with the June 2009 launch of the Xbox 360. Unveiled at the same time was a revolutionary new way to play games – Project Natal. Interaction is initiated purely through the movements of the people playing – not by any intermediary device. As the publicity blurb says: "See a ball? Kick it, hit it, trap it or catch it. If you know how to move your hands, shake your hips or speak, you and your friends can jump into the fun. The only experience needed is life experience." A ground-breaking sensor combines a camera, depth sensor, microphone and layers of special software to enable body movements to be tracked and registered. Playing your favourite Xbox game will never be the same again.

HOME COMPUTING

As in the gaming world, home computing innovations continue to reflect the trend for interacting in ways other than via keyboard and mouse. The Hewlett Packard TouchSmart PC enables a more intuitive way of working: the touch screen is operated by tapping or sweeping your finger directly on the screen.

With the Hewlett Packard TouchSmart tx2 Notebook PC, you can draw and take notes on screen with a pressure-sensitive digital pen that even recognises your handwriting. The monitor can be twisted to become a flat slate, enabling a more natural writing experience. And, to top it all off, your notes will be automatically converted to typed text.

But it's a product called Microsoft Surface that's got the computing world talking. It has the ability to turn an ordinary surface, such as a tabletop, into an interactive surface that responds to instinctive gestures and touch. It was first seen in the 2002 futuristic movie *Minority Report* and is currently available in some US hotels. We're betting this technology will eventually end up in Kiwi homes too. You read it here first. ■

STOCKISTS

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Automation Associates (09) 377 3778
Bang & Olufsen (09) 524 2411
Bauhaus (09) 302 2651
BoConcept (09) 630 0557
Child (09) 360 8088
Control4 (09) 630 7090
Corporate Culture (09) 379 4466
Designer Rugs (09) 300 6116
Eastern HiFi (09) 623 2600
Enhance Technology (04) 938 3554
Forma (09) 368 7694
Integrated Lifestyle Innovations (09) 974 4109
Kikki.K (09) 524 0156
MagnumMac 0800 622 468
Nest 0800 367 637
October Reign (09) 361 6960
Republic (09) 361 1137
Smiggle (09) 520 0459
Soundline soundline.co.nz
Strawberry Sound 0800 901 234
Totally Wired 0800 909 101

extra

What's on your list this month?

Elizabeth Arden

Everything you love about Eight Hour Cream in two new essentials for your face – Intensive Daily Moisturizer for Face SPF15 and Sun Defense for Face SPF50. Available now from all Elizabeth Arden stockists.

Gemtime

This beautiful gold and sapphire ring and pendant set is available exclusively to Gemtime. Visit www.gemtime.co.nz for your closest store or phone 0800 80 4367.

Eyepro

Linkskin is the first environmentally friendly eyewear made from recycled and recyclable materials. Outstanding designs, great comfort and kind to the environment. Available exclusively from your local EYEPRO practice. www.eyepro.co.nz or 0508 393 776.

Ant Chair by Arne Jacobsen

Designed in 1952, the Ant chair is a light, stackable chair with seat and back in one piece of moulded, laminated timber. Despite its svelte shape it is extremely comfortable. RRP from $987. Available at Corporate Culture, (09) 379 4466, www.corporateculture.co.nz

Lancome

The first youth activator. Génifique by Lancome revives gene activity to stimulate the production of youth proteins – the result of 10 years' research. Try Génifique and see visibly younger skin in just seven days. Suitable for all ages and all skin types.

Tuatara Tours: Franz Josef Trail

Experience the natural beauty and history of the West Coast of the South Island on Tuatara Tours' four day fully guided walk. Witness the dramatic ice formations of Franz Josef and Fox glaciers. 0800 377 378 or see www.tuataratours.co.nz

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☐ Please send me special *NZ House & Garden* subscriber-only promotions.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS: The prize offer is one of 400 Rata scented botanical candles. The offer is available to existing New Zealand subscribers and readers who order a subscription before August 16, 2009. Subscriptions are non-refundable.

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Rata Candles by Pacifica Skin Care

This exquisitely scented candle will fill the room with a delicious fragrance reminiscent of the New Zealand native bush. Florence Broadhurst's classic designs were the inspiration for the striking packaging. 'Rata' from the Leaves Collection is just part of a beautiful range of skin care, home fragrances and accessories. For more information visit pacificaskincare.co.nz.

pacifica SKINCARE

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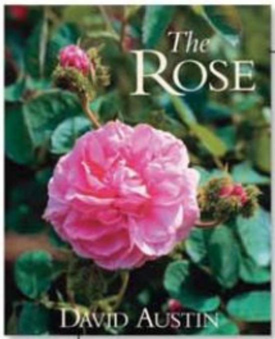
Bookcase

Kerry Engelbrecht goes browsing for the best reading



THE ROSE

David Austin

(publisher Garden Art Press, Antique Collectors' Club, distributed by Bookreps NZ, 352 pages, $130, hardback)

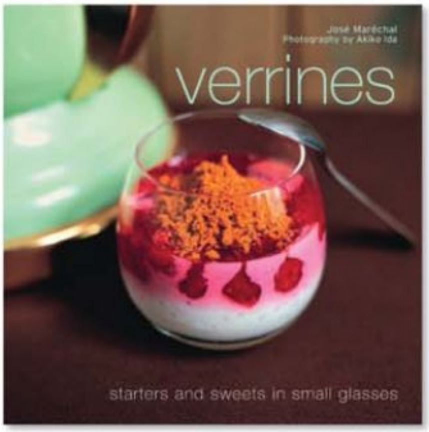
David Austin's name is familiar to most rose lovers because his English Roses combine the fragrant characteristics of old roses with the longer flowering habits and broader colour spectrum of modern roses. Unable to see the point in growing roses that are not inherently beautiful, Austin has spent more than 50 years focusing on beauty, fragrance and elegance of growth and foliage before those other important characteristics of disease resistance, freedom of flowering and hardiness. The resulting roses have now become so diverse that he has classified them into six different groups: old rose hybrids, the Leander group, the English musk roses and the alba rose hybrids, together with climbing English Roses and cut flowers – specially bred to be grown under glass for the cut-flower trade. All English Roses share the unassuming, old-fashioned beauty that is so captivating in their ancestors but, by making them more rewarding as garden plants, Austin has single-handedly ensured the survival of these endearing characteristics in our gardens and homes. Buy this book and fall in love all over again.

Rose Thodey is NZ House & Garden's gardening editor

VERRINES

José Maréchal

(publisher Murdoch Books, distributor Allen & Unwin, 128 pages, $35, hardback)



A verrine – pronounced vair-reen, from the French word for glass (verre) – is an appetiser or dessert consisting of a number of components layered artfully in a small glass. Studies in textures, flavours, colours and even temperatures, verrines are all the rage in chic Parisian establishments. Most books on the subject are written in French; this compact digest is an English version of a book first published by Marabout in 2006. There are around 60 recipes – some complex, such as deconstructed sushi and a tricoloured white, dark and caramel chocolate mousse, and some as simple as soft cheese, shredded ham and diced cucumber. Others, such as a pasta salad, appear to have acquired verrine status simply by being served in a glass. If you subscribe to the idea that starting with an impressive appetiser and ending with a spectacular dessert guarantees a fabulous dinner, then verrines are ideal for entertaining. They have visual appeal, flair and can be assembled ahead of time. Creative cooks will be inspired.

Sally Butters is NZ House & Garden's entertaining editor

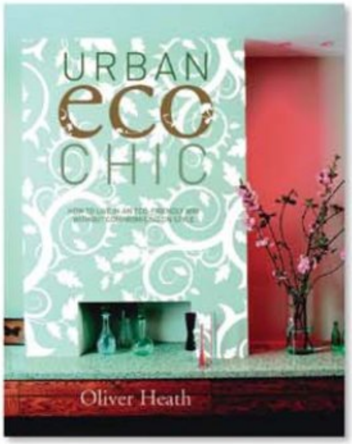
THE BIG BOOK OF INTERIORS

Agata Losantos

(Collins Design and Loft Publications, distributed by HarperCollins, 383 pages, $54.99, paperback)

It occurred to me while reading this book that the era it depicts is all but over. Blame Wall Street bankers for the cold new financial reality, if you like, but we still have *The Big Book of Interiors* in which to enjoy that moment. The book's design is high, wide and handsome. Its subject is the last word in contemporary design. Long on pictures and untroubled by much text, it's a voyeur's delight. My copy already has bookmarks rattling around in it. The great lesson here is in the surprise elements: the clever use of space in a tiny apartment or loft stairs with boxes instead of treads. In fact the selection of staircases is sublime and now I'm longing for a two-storey house again. I was also struck by the kitchen with all the bells and whistles that somehow missed the mark, unlike the one with the dead zebra on the floor. Most overseas books leave you desperate for fabulous furniture but for the past few years we've been spoilt for choice in this country. And dreams are free.

Barb Rogers is deputy editor of NZ Gardener



URBAN ECO CHIC

Oliver Heath

(publisher Quadrille, distributor Southern Publishers, 176 pages, $55, hardback)

This pretty book is a treasure trove of ideas for creating eco-friendly interiors that are beautiful, functional and good to live in, all designed to leave the lightest possible footprint on the planet. Author Oliver Heath runs an eco-design company in Brighton, England, and his online store EcoCentric specialises in beautifully designed, sustainable products for the home. Heath's eco style is based around technology, nature and vintage; his book promotes the use of pioneering technologies that use the least possible energy, sustainable materials that leave the smallest impact on the earth and recycled or recyclable products that limit the resources used in the creation of interiors and homewares. The result is a contemporary style that is ethical, eco-conscious and yet as individual as each homeowner. More than 100 photographs, along with informative, highly readable text that covers everything from energy-efficient appliances and sustainable building materials to bedlinen and even cutlery, make *Urban Eco Chic* a useful resource that is also a delight to the eye.

Kerry Engelbrecht is NZ House & Garden's books editor

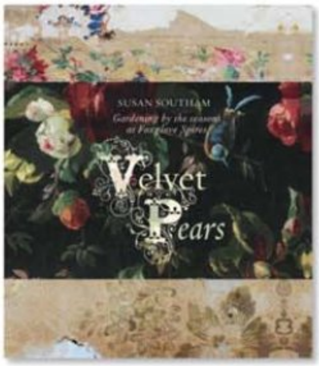
VELVET PEARS

Susan Southam

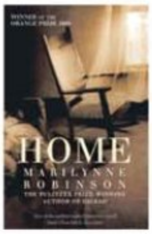
(publisher Murdoch Books, distributor Allen & Unwin, 296 pages, $69.99, hardback)

Contained within this irresistibly pretty book is a heart-warming story of country life dictated by the seasons. Author Susan Southam is the maker of a garden called Foxglove Spires, a New South Wales treasure. She moved there as a young bride in 1984 with husband Peter and baby daughter Yasmin and literally let destiny lead her up the garden path. *Velvet Pears* is the story of this special place, intertwined with tales of hopes and dreams, droughts and flood, births and deaths. The author's journals hold 25 years of memories: her daughter Shalimar's birth, Yasmin's wedding, the creation of an extraordinary 55m espaliered pear arbour and the transformation of a sheep paddock into a 2.6ha (7.7 acre) paradise. The photos in this book, mostly Southam's own, are uniformly outstanding and the page design is a treat. I would have liked a plant index, but *Velvet Pears* is otherwise a delight. Allen & Unwin publicist Abba Renshaw sums it up nicely: "I'm in love!"

Kerry Engelbrecht



Hot picks this month at Poppies stores

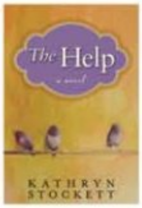


Home
by Marilynne Robinson

Winner of the Orange Prize 2009 and from author of *Gilead,* this is about a dying Presbyterian minister whose youngest daughter returns to take care of him. Her brother also returns, seeking refuge after 20 years, and gradually the siblings repair their damaged relationship. In doing so, they find their way 'home' – something they were unable to do as children. Their complex relationship, delicately nuanced voices and silences, and their fragile yet sustaining love, are the themes for this beautiful book.

Dead People's Music
by Sarah Laing

This is an extraordinary accomplished debut novel where old and new stories are woven, and two women's lives linked by a cello. It is witty, insightful, scathing and tender with great characterisation. Highly recommended.



The Help
by Kathryn Stockett

A feisty, gripping novel that explores the lives of subversive black servant women set in America's deep south in the early 1960s. Narrated by three women from each of their perspectives, this book makes for compulsive reading with characters that are extremely realistic and unique.

The Thing Around Your Neck
by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

From author of *Purple Hibiscus* and *Half of a Yellow Sun* (Orange Prize Winner) comes a collection of 12 stunning short stories in which the author turns her penetrating eye on the ties that bind men and women, parents and children, Nigeria and the West.

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Titles reviewed in this month's *NZ House & Garden* book review section available at Poppies stores.

NZHOUSE &GARDEN

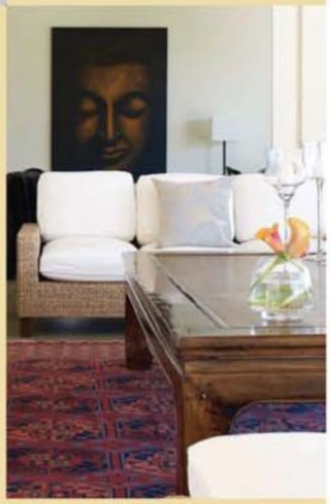
on the web...

MORE RECIPES

Try an extra recipe from our Rise & Shine breakfast menu – delicious Spiced Chocolate Coffee.

MORE PHOTOS

If you'd like to see more images from some of the houses and gardens in this issue, simply go to our website. See more of the Lee house in Te Aroha, the Rooke house near Arrowtown, the Perry house in Waikanae and the Hobbs garden in Christchurch.



ONLINE PRIZES

Win one of 10 **La Prairie Beauté à Porter Skin Caviar Concealer-Foundations** in Preche valued at $195 each. Beauté à Porter is a purse-portable version of La Prairie's age-defying Skin Caviar Concealer-Foundation SPF15. The sleek silver pen houses a cartridge containing Skin Caviar Foundation SPF15. Tucked into the cap of the pen is a colour-coordinated Skin Caviar Concealer to camouflage any skin imperfections or signs of fatigue that may appear during the day. It's ideal for travel or freshening up your makeup when you're not at home.

www.nzhouseandgarden.co.nz

Music

Kate Mead listens for the latest sounds

GOMIDAS SONGS

Isabel Bayrakdarian (soprano)

Nonesuch 511487-2

Isabel Bayrakdarian sings of spring and yet my heart breaks to hear her. Why? "Spring is here, yet it has snowed / My lover is cool to me / Ah, my unfortunate beloved." Never has the season of rebirth sounded as poignant as when this Canadian-raised soprano revisits the folk music of her native Armenia. This exquisite CD is her first to spring from her own heritage. She was discovered on the opera stage, winning the 2000 Operalia competition, an event that owes its foundation to Placido Domingo. I've played Bayrakdarian on air and every time I do there is a delighted response. She's a musician of many aspects – classical, contemporary and folk – and is equally respectful of all the genres she represents. In this recording of songs by beloved Armenian composer Gomidas Vartabed, she brings superb vocal technique to her countryman's delightful interpretations of Armenian life.

BEING DUFAY

Ambrose Field/John Potter

ECM 2071 (476 6948)

Music of the liturgy has always held a special place in my vicar's-daughter heart. And what more appropriate recording to encourage spirituality in a lapsed but open-hearted nature than an interpretation of the 15th century French composer Guillaume Dufay? Untrained, but with a sure instinct for all things musical, Dufay has become a key to the music of antiquity. I'd say that his masses are as important to followers of the genre as the Bayeux Tapestry is to art historians. *Being Dufay* is a digital-age interpretation of the master of historic soul music from Ambrose Field, a three-times winner at the international Prix Ars Electronica. As the centuries telescope towards one another, Field sets up sensitive electronic environments against which his muse, tenor John Potter, 18 years a member of the Hilliard Ensemble, humanises spirituality, ancient and modern. ■

Kate Mead is a production manager at Radio New Zealand Concert

Virtually there

Kim Rutter faces hard times with mouse in hand

Times are hard. No tax cuts. No superannuation. No credit. But amid the weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth in our bleak, creditless outer darkness, there is a small ray of light. Internet budget tips!

First, you need to know the scope of your problem. Go to sorted.org.nz and use their budget calculator (**tinyurl.com/m36u87**). If you discover you are rolling in excess cash, stop reading now and go and inject some much-needed dollars into the economy via the retail sector. But if you are spending more than you earn now is the time to stop.

Best place to start is in the kitchen. I must admit frugal food is not my forte. The closest I've ever come to meatloaf is a delicious but rather complex chicken galantine with truffles (**tinyurl.com/2wamtw**) and the frugal-sounding carrot caviar (**tinyurl.com/lmfzqe**) created quite a peculiar taste sensation.

Sadly, I don't understand leftovers at all. Wouldn't it be quicker just to throw out the excess food immediately rather than set up a science experiment with it in the back of the fridge first? No, says **LeftoverLovers.com**. They are dedicated to providing us with "helpful money-saving recipes, cooking and planning ideas that result in cheaper, quicker, easier, tasty meals". I'm depressed already.

I think a better way to save in the kitchen would be to remodel. The time has come to get a new energy-efficient fridge and dishwasher, and induction cooktops are not only hip but so much cheaper to run (download Westinghouse's Future-proof Kitchens brochure from **tinyurl.com/poyqma** for all the facts). You could replace your bulbs with LED fixtures while you're at it – very energy-efficient (**tinyurl.com/q7bz86**). By far the best energy-saving cooking tip is from BakingBites.com (**tinyurl.com/2jqoqd**). Car-baked chocolate chip cookies: all you need is a sunny day, a hot dashboard and you can really wow the neighbours.

If this whole budgeting thing is really new to you, Dumb Little Man has 30 Easy Ways to Save Money (and No, You Are Not Doing Them All!) (**tinyurl.com/yp95hq**). I think that speaks for itself. Leaving Excess wants you to make your own home cleaners (**tinyurl.com/nd9yq4**). One Easy Thing (**tinyurl.com/4sjty4**) suggests rinsing, drying and reusing plastic sandwich bags. The situation is clearly getting desperate.

Regardless, I prefer the Budget Fashionista's tips for online designer discount shopping (**tinyurl.com/pgj6oz**). Failing that, you can always consider moving home with your parents (quickly, before your kids move home to be with you). Warning: if you are considering this, read the Times Online article in which a 52-year-old man moves home to save money (**tinyurl.com/6gr466**).

How did we get into this state anyway? I don't blame my personal inability to live within my means of course – I blame Chrysler and the US sub-prime mortgage market. The short and simple story of their role in the birth of the credit crisis is brilliantly illustrated at **tinyurl.com/cbw4hx**. Watch this and then impress your friends at dinner parties with your understanding of the situation.

I also blame the New Zealand Electricity industry and its dodgy pricing model. New Zealand power is clean and cheap to make, but I still spend more than the GDP of a small Third World country on heating my home. If that seems confusing, wait till you compare your personal $/kWh charge to the wholesale rate at which the retail power companies actually buy the stuff. You can see the regional average price at electricityinfo.co.nz (**tinyurl.com/n79la6**). I don't know what the price will be when you look, but it was 0.2c/kWh when I was writing this. At least being outraged is still free.

Tiny URLs

You may have noticed something unusual about the way we have presented some web addresses. These are tinyurl addresses, which are a clever way of shortening very long web addresses (urls) so that you don't have to type in super-long strings of characters. I hope they help.

ILLUSTRATION: IMAGES.COM/CORBIS/TRANZ

urban eye

What's hot in cities around the country

AUCKLAND

SHELLEY BRIDGEMAN

1

1 EAST DAY SPA
In downtown Auckland there's a slice of upmarket Indonesia where candles flicker and the air is fragrant with exotic Mogra incense. Bronze Hindu deities, decorative screens and diaphanous curtains underscore the serenity as sarong-clad therapists perform massages, scrubs, wraps and facials; Balinese massage is a speciality. A soundproofed manicure and pedicure room is tailor-made for private hens' parties and other all-girl occasions. East Day Spa also has branches at Auckland's Mollies Hotel, in Wellington and Bali.
SkyCity Grand Hotel, 123 Albert St, (09) 363 7050, eastdayspa.com

2

2 TULLY & GARDENER
Tully & Gardener offer a carefully edited selection of plants, tools and accessories. They sell herbs, topiary, lavender, citrus trees, aprons, gumboots, tealight candle holders, watering cans, secateurs, topiary frames, gardening books – and even hedging by the metre. Every tabletop and wall display looks as if it was styled for a photograph in a glossy magazine. This atmospheric indoor-outdoor space, owned by award-winning landscape designer Trina Tully and billed as "continuing the proud heritage of traditional English garden stores", is sure to inspire you to get some dirt under your fingernails.
139 Richmond Rd, Grey Lynn, (09) 360 7576, tullyandgardener.co.nz

3 FORBES FOR FOOD
Recently I was expecting 10 guests for a celebration dinner. Instead of stressing and spending the entire day chopping and simmering, I headed to Forbes – the place that makes delicious home-cooked meals when you can't be bothered. Ten portions of North African chicken, figs and apricots later, I was all set. Mains include casseroles, curries, pastas, pies and tagines. Side dishes, cakes, desserts and finger food are also on the menu. Tim and Gael Forbes have been cooking up a storm in small batches and from local produce for 10 years. And they deliver throughout metropolitan Auckland.
144/146 Allum St, Kohimarama, (09) 521 4041, forbesforfood.co.nz

WELLINGTON

ANN PACKER

4

4 MUSEUM HOTEL HIGH TEA
There's not much time these days to play ladies, so why not dress up for afternoon tea? Forget the harbour views – the eye-catching fashion is as entertaining as the strolling violinist, the accents of the waiters (all, it seems, from places redolent with romance) and the selection of teas poured from elegant silver into fine china. Champagne is an optional extra. The tiered cake stand has something for every taste from savoury canapes piled with duck liver mousse, salmon and fig paste with blue cheese to teeny lemon meringue tarts. Scones with thick blackberry jam and clotted cream complete the offerings, which are served from 2pm to 4.30pm daily. Delectable!
90 Cable St, (04) 802 8935, museumhotel.co.nz

5 ARTY BEE'S BOOKS
Founder Bob Burch started collecting books two decades ago after being made redundant at the age of 60. Now the family's Courtenay Place and Manners Street shops have been combined into one upstairs-downstairs megastore at The Oaks, just around from Lower Cuba's bus stops. With an extra half-kilometre of linear shelf space there's even more room for the desirable, such as Taschen's divine facsimile atlases, the rare – how about a book on Hitler's staff cars? – and the bizarre, as well as a constant turnover of crime, science fiction, kids' books and much more. They'll buy your surplus volumes, paying cash or twice the amount in credit. Or, if you simply want to clear out your shelves, they'll donate the equivalent value to local schools.
The Oaks, Manners St, (04) 384 5339, artybees.co.nz

6

6 THE NEWDOWSE
Wellington art connoisseur, children's literature aficionado and dealer gallery mentor Celia Dunlop didn't live to see the publication of Steele Roberts' book *Thrill Me Every Day,* which documents her collection of New Zealand art. The exhibition of the same name launches the book and showcases the work she started collecting as a schoolgirl in Palmerston North and lived with until her untimely death last year. Also showing is a stunning survey of work by Maori artist John Walsh (his *First We Take San Francisco* is pictured here) and the reconstructed landscapes of expatriate New Zealander Felix Kelly in *A Kiwi at Brideshead*. June 13 to September 27.
45 Laings Rd, Lower Hutt, dowse.org.nz

CHRISTCHURCH

KIM RUTTER

7

7 COWS GO MOO

Cute, practical, affordable, easy-care clothes for babies and toddlers that don't have that bought-in-the-mall look – that's the Cows Go Moo mantra. Kelly Leigh's funky designs have been available online for several years but now she has opened her first store, stocking her own line as well as fancy duds from Adidas, Converse and Trelise Cooper Kids for those blow-the-budget moments. And here's a hot tip: your son does not like wearing stuff from Pumpkin Patch now he's 10. Get him a pair of Eureka skinny-leg jeans and he will love you forever (or at least till he remembers you won't let him have a Bebo page).

177 High St, City, (03) 372 3428

8 SIMO'S DELI AND TAKEOUT

I have always loved Simo's Moroccan Restaurant in Cashel Street and now I can get the same wonderful couscous and tagines to take away from Simo's new deli bar in Beckenham. Add to that the most divine harissa and aioli and a selection of dips to die for (the beetroot and the spicy carrot are unbeatable) and suddenly I am making the journey to deepest, darkest Beckenham on a worryingly regular basis. I try to time it for lunchtime so I can buy a boccadillo, a kind of Spanish-Moroccan filled roll with choose-your-own fillings such as ginger and chilli poached chicken. No wonder my jeans are tight.

143 Colombo St, Beckenham, (03) 332 6333, simos.co.nz

9 KOSHER KITCHEN

I admit it – I wouldn't know a gefilte fish from a matzo ball, but you don't need to be Jewish to enjoy the cakes and pastries from the Kosher Kitchen. If you are Jewish, however, owner Bobby Meyer-Gibson wants you to know the kitchen adheres to the Chabad food standard, which is particularly stringent. Luckily, being kosher does not affect the taste. I am particularly taken with the borekas (a kind of Jewish vegetarian Cornish pasty) and the spectacular special-occasion cakes (the only certified kosher wedding cakes in town).

215 Tuam St, City, (03) 374 5590

9

DUNEDIN

CECILIE GEARY

10

10 LUSH

Dunedin needs more speciality stores like Lush. The beauty delicatessen has been open just over three months and is already the hot place to shop. Freshly made face masks (kept on ice), fragrant soaps (sold by the slice), flower or fruit-infused shower jellies and body butter creams that look like luscious desserts are going down a treat. There's no need to feel guilty about over-indulging here, as Lush uses only ethically sourced ingredients and supports green causes and fair trade.

Wall St Mall, 209-233 George St, (03) 474 0000, lushnz.com

11 MOONEYS FURRIERS

Mooneys' fur throws are the last word in decadent cocooning and their fur collars are a dream to wear. Since the closure of Mooneys' downtown retail store, Max Wilson and Heather Kirk have continued to operate from the company's Parry Street workroom (near the Hocken Library), making luxurious fur items to order. It's all possum fur these days and you get to choose your pelts. Max and Heather, who are among the few trained furriers left in New Zealand, also repair and remodel vintage furs.

20/22 Parry St, (03) 477 8171

12

12 TWO CHEFS BISTRO

Last December, after a two-year break that included travelling around France, Helen Mason and Grant Cockcroft reopened their Two Chefs restaurant in a new mid-city location. The decor, with its cafe curtains, massive mirrors, smoky glass lamps and marble-topped bar, recalls Parisian bistros of the belle epoque. Don't come here, though, expecting only French food. Chefs Helen and Grant have borrowed from cuisines all over the world to create their excellent menu. The entrees and desserts are as inventive as the mains.

121 Lower Stuart St, (03) 477 7293

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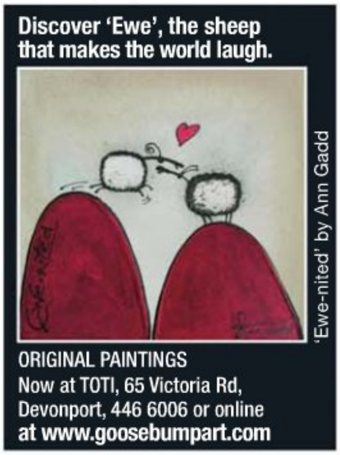

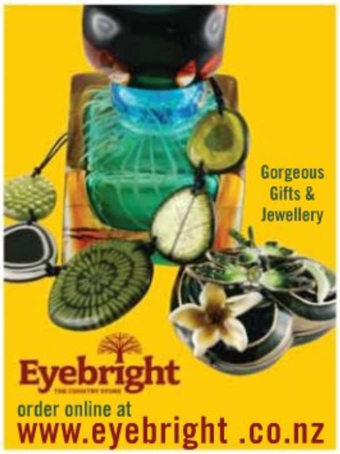

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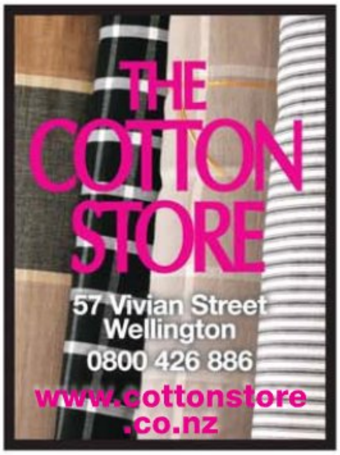

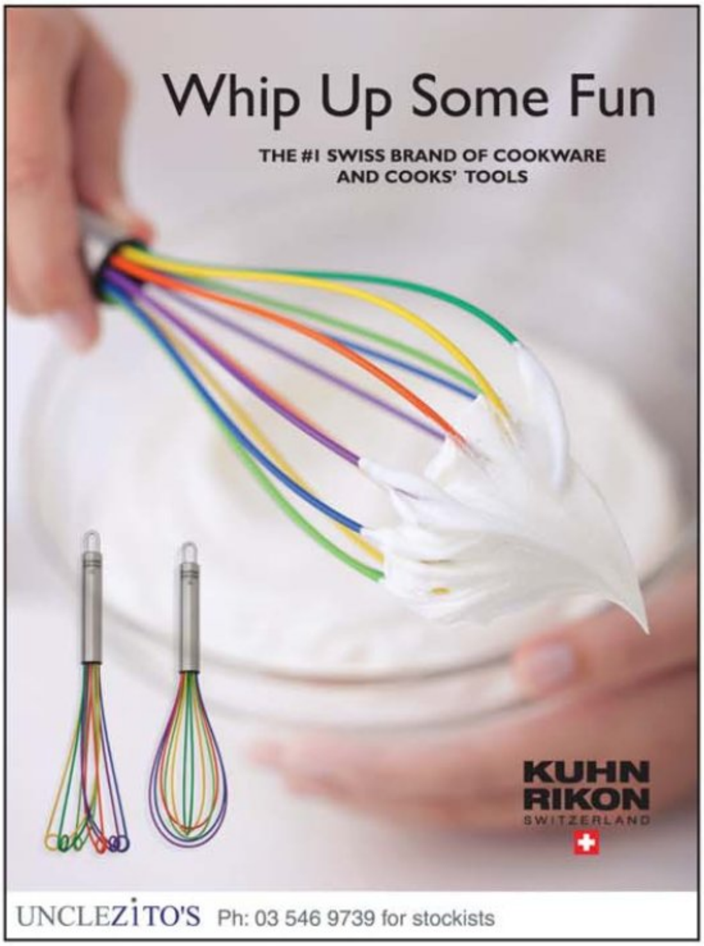

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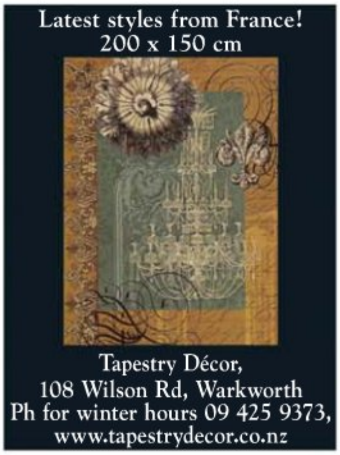

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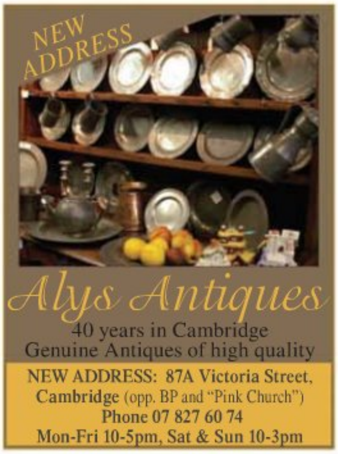

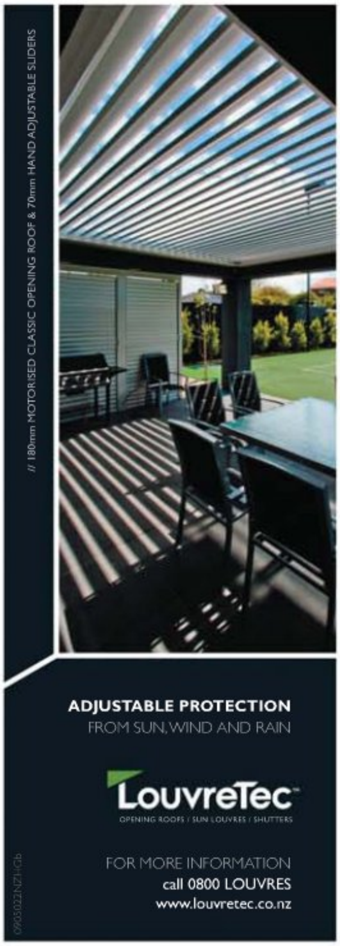

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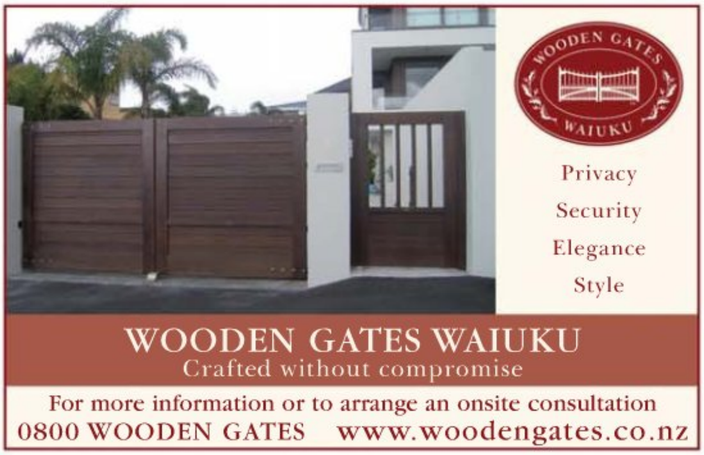

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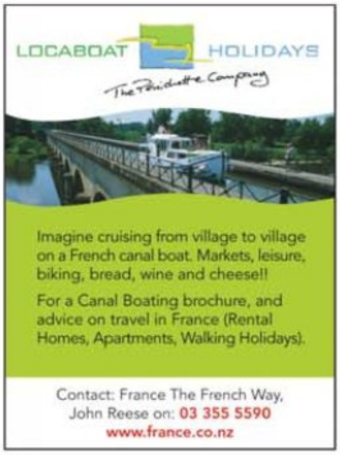

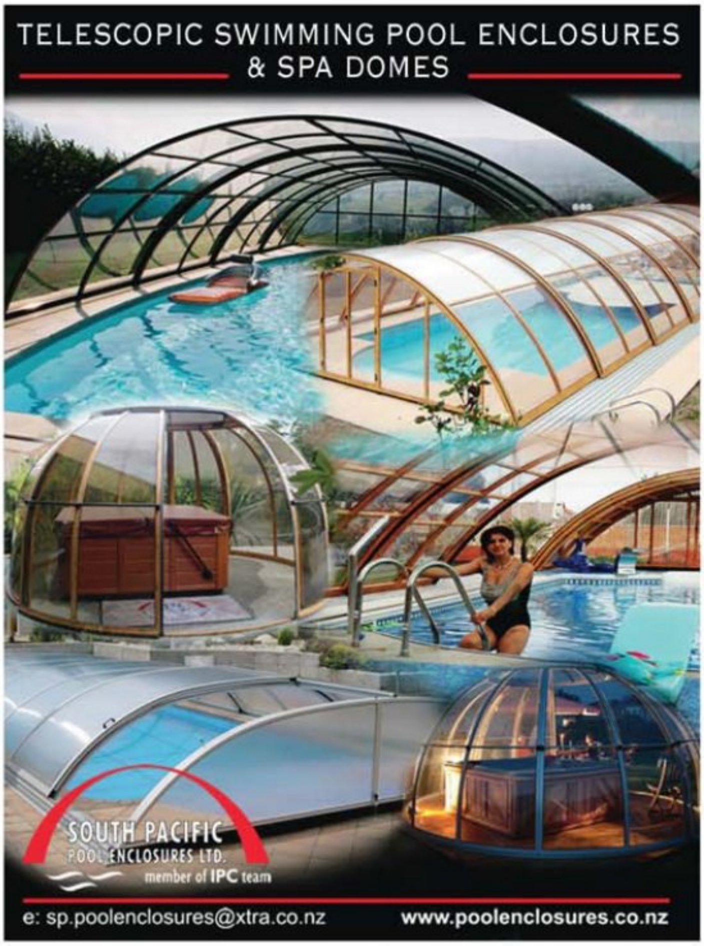

Next month in

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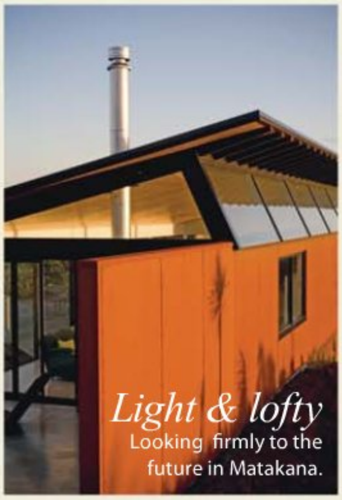

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Ngai Tahu Tourism – Hollyford Track	0800 832 226	39
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1

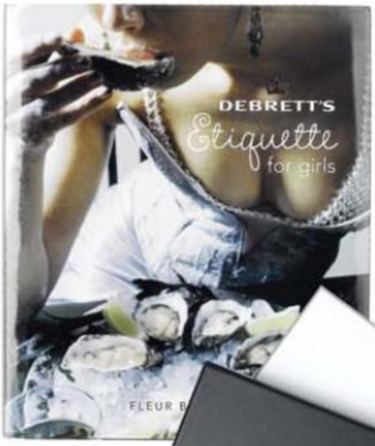
2

Essence of...

Roxane Horton looks for objects that have an authenticity about them

WORDS TRACEY STRANGE / **PHOTOGRAPHS** BELINDA MERRIE & JANE USSHER

WITH HER FIRST pay cheque, Roxane Horton bought a box of Italian hand-torn paper. She's always had an appreciation of beautiful stationery and fine papers – fortuitous, since she married into the Horton family with its long history in the print business (Rosie Horton is her mother-in-law). Roxane has three children, aged eight, six and four, and is doing her Masters degree in Foreign Affairs at Auckland University. Since last year she has also found time to co-run the new stationery company Rawlence and Horton, which specialises in engraved and monogrammed papers and envelopes. "I love objects that have an authenticity about them," she says when asked to describe her style sense. "It's about finding little luxuries regardless of price points."



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1 'Kahola' **fabric** $38/m from Martha's Fabrics, (09) 523 3655. "I want to re-cover my director's chairs for summer with this." **2** Bee & Flower sandalwood **soap** about 70 cents from Wah Lee Co, (09) 373 4583. "This is my favourite soap. My auntie gives me a box for Christmas every year." **3** Argentinian handmade silver and goat horn **letter openers** $40 each from Eterno, (09) 369 1173. "My husband will be getting one for his birthday this year." **4** *Debrett's Etiquette for Girls* by Fleur Britten $70 from Dymocks, (09) 522 3343. "A witty **book** that focuses on etiquette as a series of small kindnesses, rather than stuffy rules." **5** Rawlence and Horton Diamond Monogram range $30 for a set of 10 monogrammed **cards and envelopes**, presented in a custom-made box, rawlenceandhorton.com **6** A French **writing desk** from the early 1900s $7250 from John Stephens & Co Ltd, (09) 529 1660. "I would love to sit at this desk and wonder who else had sat there." **7** R & Y Augousti black shagreen **box** $738 from Cavit & Co, (09) 358 3771. "Based in Paris, designers R & Y Augousti take their inspiration from the 1930s, which is a period I love." **8** Rawlence and Horton personal engraved **stationery** $960 for a set of 100 engraved writing paper sheets and custom-made envelopes, rawlenceandhorton.com. "My personal stationery is pale blue with gold engraving."

6

7

8

PORTRAIT BY JANE USSHER

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